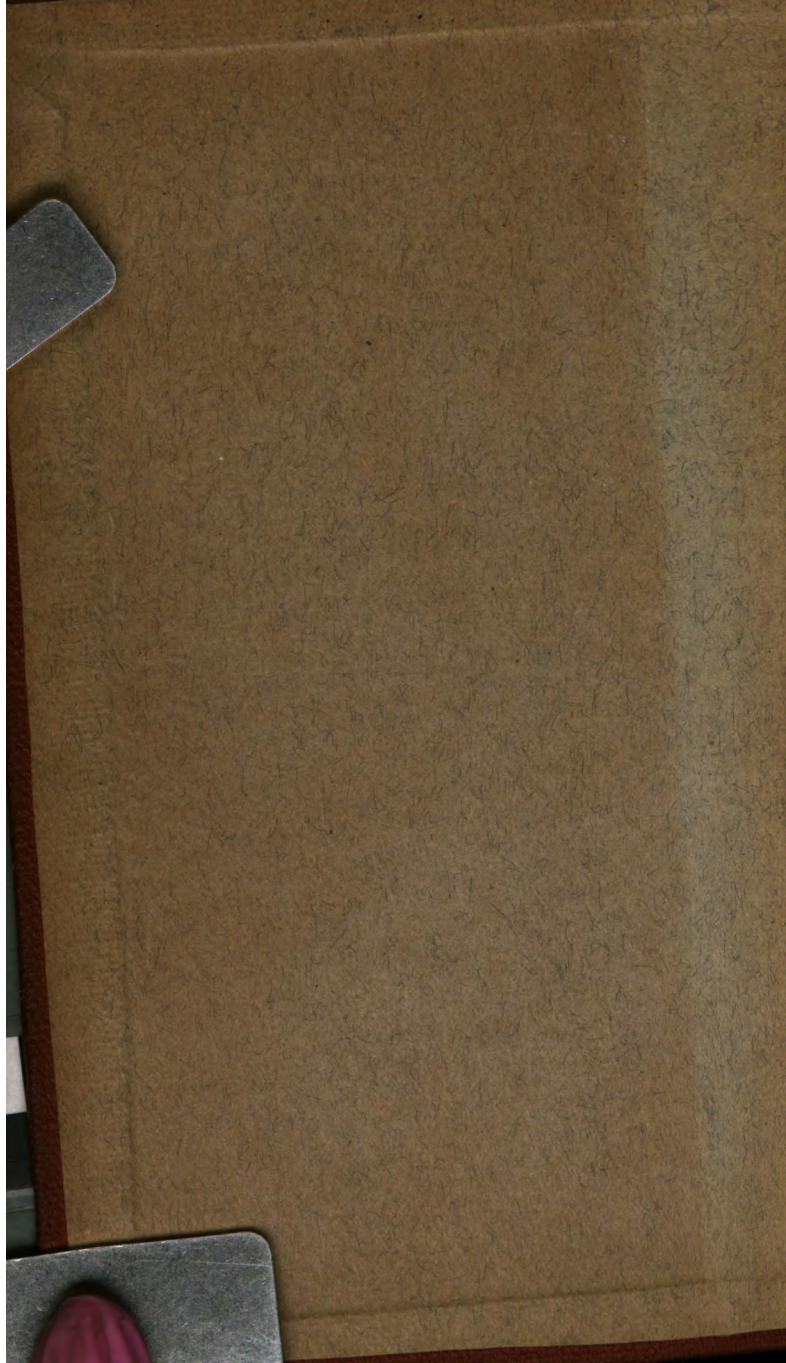


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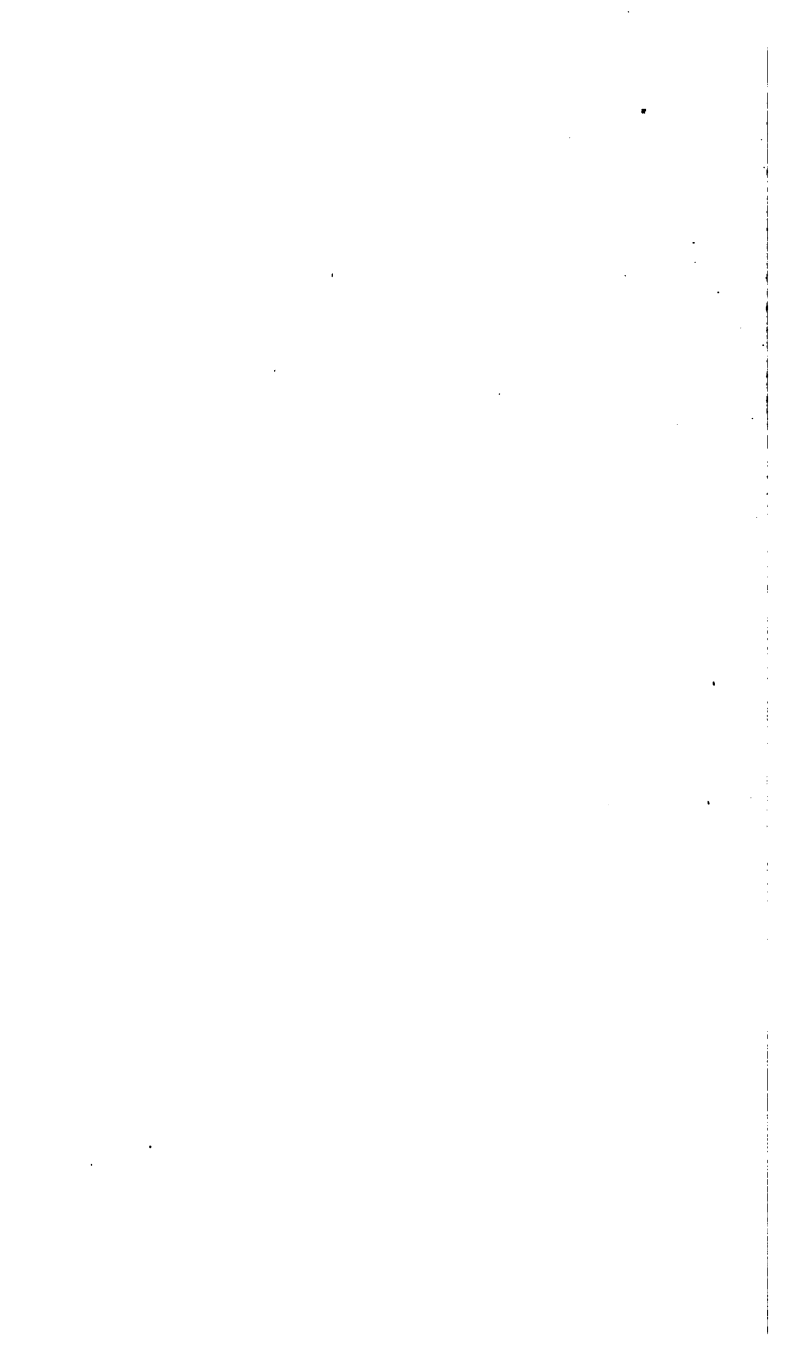
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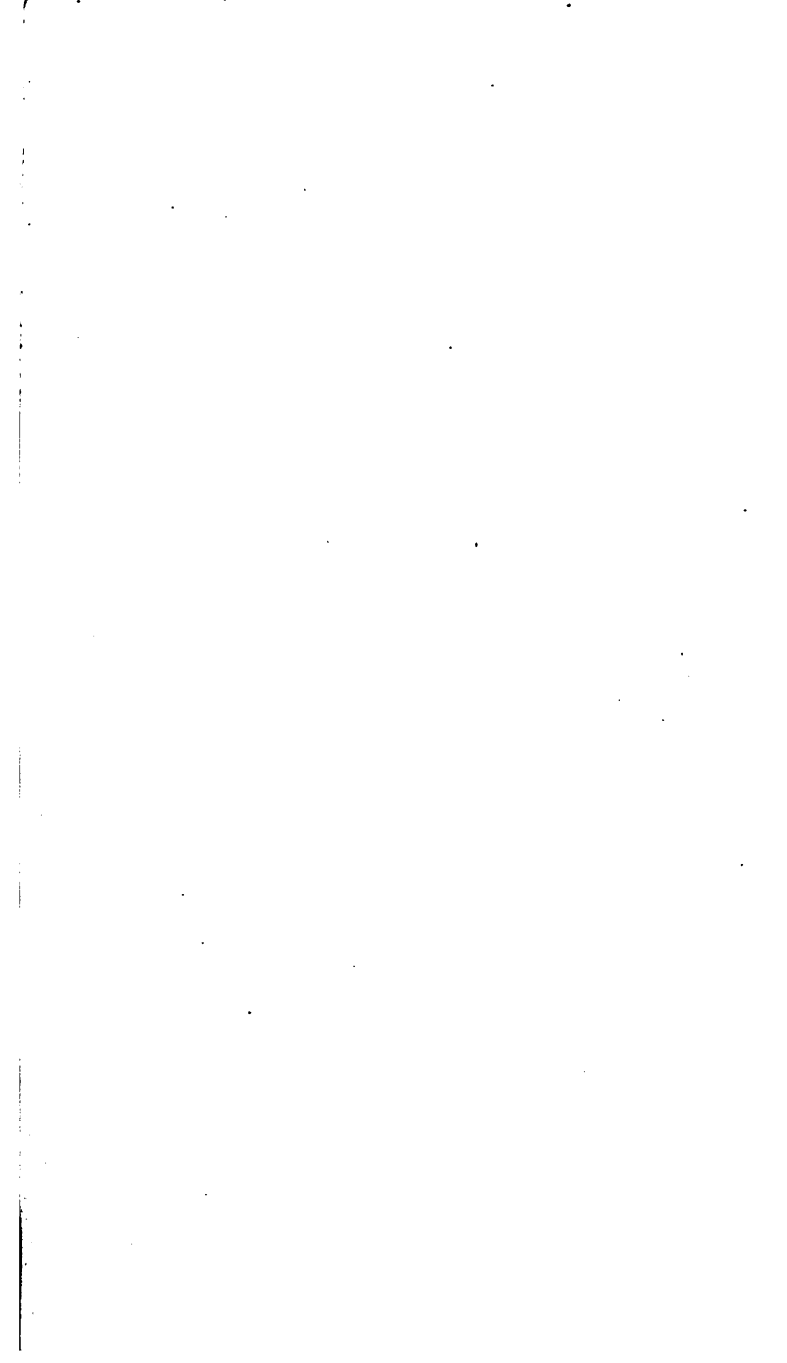


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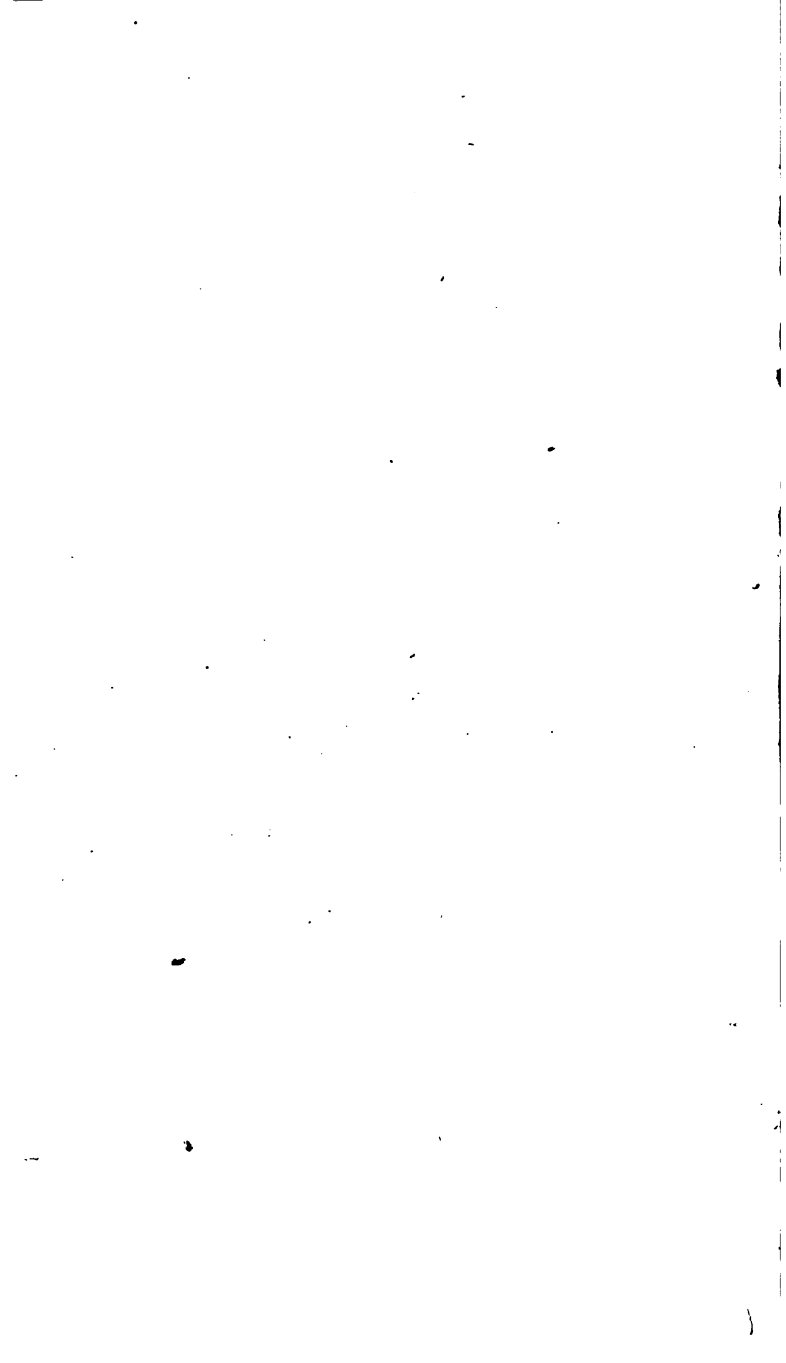




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# TALES

ROUND A

+ ✓

## WINTER HEARTH.

BY

JANE AND ANNA MARIA PORTER.

In winter's tedious nights, sit by the fire  
With good old folks; and let them tell thee tales.  
*Shakspeare.*

NEW-YORK:

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1826.

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A. E. B. Van Winkle, 28 Jan. 1916

## TO THE READER.

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STORIES told in general society, may fairly be considered as public property ; or rather, as *wests and strays*, which any one may appropriate, keep unaltered, mar, or mend, without dread of prosecution.

Three of the following tales are of this description. The first and second story were related to the writer, by a lady of high rank, distinguished for many accomplishments.—The incidents of the first, this lady warranted as facts known to one of her own family. The absurd, yet somewhat affecting imagination of the second, she spoke of as a tradition still religiously believed in Ireland. It is given here with much apprehension, yet, in the hope that it may not be without interest for persons fond of speculating upon national character.

The principal events of the third tale, were suggested by an anecdote in one of Bell's *Weekly Messengers* of last year, and there stated to have recently occurred in Scotland. For the phraseology of this little tale, the writer has to beg public indulgence, since it was difficult to give local effect to a history of obscure Scottish life, without attempting to make its humble personages speak the ordinary language of their country ; and to do this, the writer knows herself imperfectly qualified, by having only the acquaintance of earliest childhood with that fondly remembered, and most expressive dialect.

With regard to the two remaining narratives ; that of the House of Huntercombe, is a little memorial of real incidents which occurred to the narrator there ; and, even in the midst of a dear domestic circle, such as described. The incidents are simple ; what may befall country visitants every day, in our beautiful English scenery, yet preserving the relics of an interesting past. But the regularity of forth-coming fact, stopped at the closet door ; and there, where disappointment met the explorer, imagination has supplied the "what might have been" in the lost record of Burnham Abbey. The story goes far into ages back.

Hence, the actions, and converse of the personages, can only have reference to the limited circle of objects in those times of mingled piety, superstition, heroism, and barbarity. Extremes were then great: The moral chaos of paganism was just broken up; light, divided from darkness; Christianity, in the form of the Archangel Michael, it might be said, was their chaining the dragon. Therefore, of woman's heart, pure, from being kept unspotted from the world; of man's spirit, ennobled, because to serve and protect were the proofs of a gentleman; such are the exemplars of those days, and here the sketch is attempted, in the Record of Berenice.

Perhaps, the writer could not take a more opportune moment to express her admiration of a recent guide into similar noble paths, better adapted to the usages of our modern times; and which invaluable little work, is called "*The Broadstone of Honour, addressed to the Gentlemen of England.*" No gentleman of England, or any other country, can read that book without feeling in his breast

"An echo to the seat, where Honour's throned!"

*Esher, Surry, Feb. 1826.*

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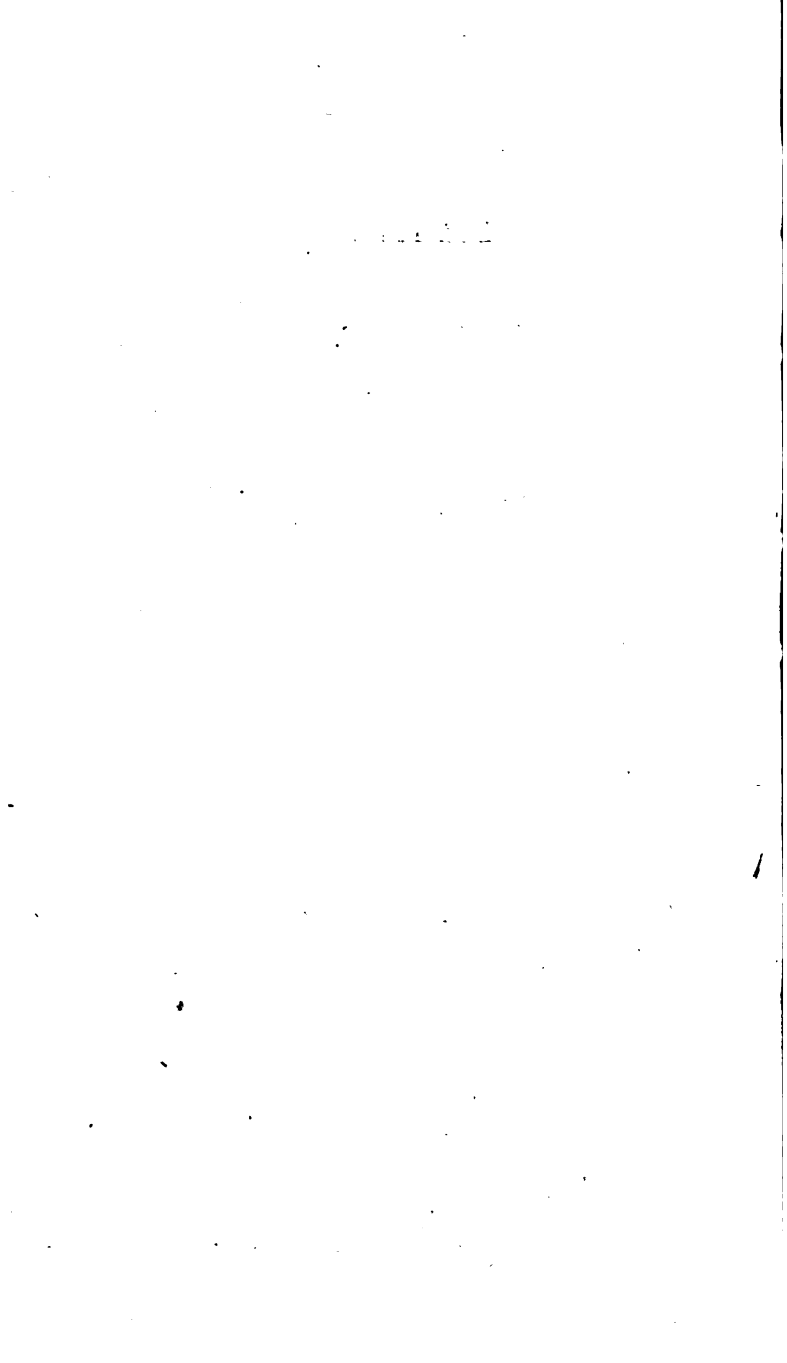


# TALES

## ROUND A WINTER HEARTH.

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It was at the domestic tea-table of a quiet family, far in the country, they were told. A few friends had met there : and a sudden snow-storm beating up against the closed shutters of the parlour windows, where the social little group were assembled, seemed by its heavy continuance to give notice that the moon, at least, must rise, to track the several guests over the fastly shrouding moorland, ere they could venture to issue forth, and separate for their different homes. On this conviction, the comfortably seated inmates drew nearer the well-piled hearth, with countenances rather smiling than appalled at their threatened captivity ; and one or other of them falling successively into little anecdotes of similar watchings, the discourse at last took the turn of passing away the remainder of the prolonged evening in the relation of various stories of a more general nature, founded on facts, or traditionally known to the parties who told them. Among the latter, the following are recollected by two of the auditors ; and thus they repeat them, for a similar hour of amusement, in any similar world-excluded winter night.



# TALES

## ROUND A WINTER HEARTH:

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### GLENROWAN,

#### A SCOTTISH TRADITION.

---

All ruined and wild is their roofless abode,  
And lonely the dark raven's sheltering tree ;  
And travelled by few is the grass-covered road,  
Where the hunter of deer and the warrior trode,  
To his hills that encircle the sea. *Campbell.*

---

THERE is yet standing in one of the wildest and most sequestered parts of Argyleshire, in Scotland, the ruins of a castle which was habitable so late as the year 1790, though even at that period only one portion of it remained entire. At present it offers but some fragments of moss-grown towers, and of broken walls, between the gaps of which the wild plum and the elder wave their neglected boughs.

The ruin stands in a melancholy glen, nearly enclosed by high heathy hills, which in summer look beautiful with their purple blossoms brightening in the sunshine ; but in winter have a dark and desolate appearance, saddening to the spirits of those who live among them. Perhaps the melancholy and monotonous sound of the sea, washing the coast at no great distance, and heard through the openings of these hills, contributes to their depressing effect. Be this as it may, the effect is depressing, and the glen is rarely passed through, even by strangers, without exciting a disposition to sigh.

To this cheerless place of residence, its proprietor, a young Scotch laird, after attaining the rank of lieutenant-colonel in a foreign service, recalled by the death of an elder brother, returned to settle there in the year 1743. He brought with him an only sister, withdrawing her thus, equally from the amusements and the bustle of life. While this sister managed his household concerns, and beguiled her hours by the practice of elegant accomplishments, he devoted himself alternately to improving study and healthful field sports.

Colonel Ferguson was naturally of a cheerful, social humour, and for some time after their abode in Glenrowan, his sister found no reason to regret her exchange from a formal pension in France, to the hall of her fathers in her native hills. They had neighbours, though distant ones; and when these were assembled under their fragrant birches in summer, or round their bright ingle in winter, the light-hearted song, or the graver legend, beguiled and cheered the hours.

Both brother and sister were young and agreeable; Annie had her admirers, and the laird his pretty favourites; but neither of them felt any greater solicitude to please, than was just sufficient to give them a useful stimulus in society.

Nearly twelve months glided gently away in such habits: after that, an extraordinary change took place.

Colonel Ferguson's spirits suddenly clouded; his habits of living altered; he became silent and thoughtful; abstracted in the company which occasionally resorted to the castle, yet taking long and frequent journeys, professedly to visit absent friends, from whose society he returned quite as sad and serious as he went.

The laird frequently spent whole weeks far up in the Highlands, in solitary hunting, inhabiting a wretched Shealing, where the deer he killed, and the water fetched from a mountain spring, were his sole refreshments; of course he lost his good looks, while under the influence of this strange humour. Annie Ferguson marked the changes in him, and watched the increase of his melancholy, with a timid concern, which at first feared to express itself; but at length, unable to control her feelings, she gave them way, pathetically beseeching him to tell her what lay heavy on his mind.

As her brother, so taxed, persisted in ascribing the change to her fancy, or, perhaps, to a little weariness in a course of life so different from the stir of camps to which he had been used, she tenderly persuaded him to let her invite a friend she highly valued, on a long visit to the castle; intimating that such an inmate was now essential to her own distressed spirits. Colonel Ferguson, though with rather an ill grace, consented to this, and Miss Mackay was written to. Shortly afterward she arrived in Glenrowan.

This young lady was an orphan, and being a few years older than Annie Ferguson, with a small fortune entirely in her own hands, was free to go whither she would.

Miss Mackay was not a beautiful woman; but she had fine eyes, and a particularly graceful figure, and her face had an expression in it, which once looked on, the eye loved to return to: it was bright, intelligent, and gladdening; her temper was actively, not passively amicable; her habits of thought cheerful; and her conversation had that perpetual playfulness which extends over serious subjects, without seeking to take from their importance.

Such qualities only are precious in a home companion: but Miss Mackay had yet higher ones, fitting her for yet higher purposes.

She was endowed with peculiar strength of mind, clearness of judgment, and firmness of resolution. While she beheld her softer and less mentally gifted friend weep over the laird's altered spirits, this judicious young lady set herself to study the nature of his malady, for the purpose of discovering whether it were real malady, or some secret sorrow, which kind sympathy or prudent counsel might medicine. The result of her observations was, that Colonel Ferguson was actually suffering from some real cause for despondency.

At his age it was natural to suppose him in love, and that the death or infidelity of the woman he loved, was the occasion of his present situation; but Miss Mackay was a better discerner of spirits; and soon believing herself sure that Colonel Ferguson's thoughts were weighed upon by some painful or dangerous secret, she endeavoured by every kind, unobtrusive attention, to win his esteem and confidence.

During the period of six months (for so long had Miss Mackay remained in the castle at the urgent entreaty of her

younger (friend,) many accidental circumstances occurred, which called forth and displayed that young lady's extraordinary qualities. Colonel Ferguson's dejected solitariness had already partially yielded to the attraction and force of her character; and from the moment in which he had seen her give proofs of undaunted courage, and extraordinary presence of mind, (which the calamity of a fire in a house where they were all visiting, brought into action,) he ceased to avoid her companionship; nay, frequently sought it voluntarily.

Annie Ferguson remarked this with secret joy, for Miss Mackay was dear to her affection; nay, so necessary now to her happiness, that she contemplated the probability of an union between her and her brother, with tearful transport.

But of such union, there was, in fact, little probability—Colonel Ferguson rather seeking a friend than soliciting a mistress; and Miss Mackay's pity for him partaking more of that feeling with which a strong mind compassionates the sufferings of a weak one, than of such admiring devotedness as characterizes the love of high-souled woman.

By degrees this young lady took the liberty of accompanying the laird in his long rides, which had hitherto been solitary, as they were generally prolonged far beyond the strength of his young and delicate sister. At such times Miss Mackay observed that even the little vivacity he affected before Annie, entirely abandoned him; and that, in truth, he appeared not unwilling to have his companion fancy him labouring under some heavy heart burthen. Encouraged by this circumstance, Miss Mackay ventured occasionally to remark upon his evident depression, and its possible cause; at first confining herself to expressions of benevolent interest in his happiness, yet doing this with a frankness and simplicity which made it impossible for the grossest vanity to mistake the merely friendly nature of her sentiments.

Colonel Ferguson obviously understood her purpose.—He would sigh, smile, and thank her in general terms: sometimes waiving the subject with a portion of his original playfulness—sometimes hesitatingly—with an abrupt commencement of agitated sentences as abruptly broken off—in short, by many testimonies of a wish, yet a fear, of making some important confidence.

Among the variety of possible causes which Miss Mackay assigned by turns in her own thoughts to Colonel Ferguson's dejection, she principally rested upon one, which, to a Southron, might appear ridiculous, were we not well aware of the existence and influence of a superstition which, even to this day, remains unsubdued in its ancient strong hold, the Highlands of Scotland.—I mean a belief in second sight.

It was too, likely, she thought, that Colonel Ferguson might either be the real or the fancied victim of this fatal faculty; a faculty of foreseeing disasters, which he who foresees them knows to be inevitable. If this were the case, friendship could do little beyond sympathizing with the sufferer. It was, however, important for Annie Ferguson's sake, that something certain should be known of her brother's inward feelings; and Miss Mackay at length took courage to mention her conjectures to Colonel Ferguson himself.

This occurred one day after she had followed him in his hasty ascent of a height commanding a view of the sea, and had observed the eagerness and wildness with which, casting his eyes around, he exclaimed aloud—"I see, I see the bloody issue."

At these words, Miss Mackay boldly stepped forward, apologizing for her intrusion, and her unintentional privy to this his secret communion with his own spirit; at the same time urging him, with a tenderness the more persuasive, as it was not the ordinary character of her manner, to consider her as a sister: one, perhaps, not equal in exclusive devotedness to his fate and feelings as his own sister, yet one better qualified by more years, and a hardier frame of mind, to assist him in discovering whether he were the prey of sickly delusion, or really visited with the awful power of beholding the shadows of coming evils.

Colonel Ferguson remained silent, long after she had ceased to speak; his countenance meanwhile, changing visibly; when, at last, he addressed her, his voice was low and emphatic.

"Miss Mackay," he said, "if I take you at your kind word, and confide to your breast the secret which oppresses my own, be assured that I am neither overborne by your sister-like persuasions, nor yet by a more particular admiration of your person and character, than my obligations to you for cheering mine and my dear sister's loneliness, may



well warrant. I would neither gratify you, nor relieve myself, however tempted by your sensibility, were I not at this moment, in want of such a firm-minded friend as I know you are capable of becoming.—Bitterly do I lament that my darling Annie's timid character, makes it impossible for me to repose trust in *her*:—to confide in *her*, poor love, would be stabbing her at once! I have a secret, Miss Mackay; but it is not wholly mine: I may not wantonly, uselessly divulge it: it is a secret fraught with difficulty and danger both to the relator and the hearer: once a partaker of it, you may come to loss, reproach, undeserved reproach; yet you *may* perform the greatest service: you may save a whole set of just and honourable persons.”—Here Colonel Ferguson hastily broke off, resuming with more calmness, “Your personal assistance in this matter would be invaluable just now; and it is in the hope of obtaining that, that I make you this confidence; but if, when known, you shrink from what I must ask of you, I will not urge my request: in such case, however, you must promise never to reveal what I shall have disclosed. Have you courage for this secret?”

Miss Mackay fixed her eyes earnestly upon the laird's face for some moments; then, without withdrawing them, said, in as serious a voice as his own, “Colonel Ferguson, if your secret contains nothing against the commandments of God, and the well-being of my country, I am here ready to hear it, keep it, swear to keep it.”

“Well, then,” exclaimed Colonel Ferguson, with a brightened look, “I will communicate it to you this night; for I must be away to-morrow morn, on a matter that neither brooks delay, nor may be done by another. Dare you trust yourself with me alone, for one hour at midnight? If you dare, provide yourself with your plaid, and by twelve o'clock be at the smaller door of the last quadrangle, and I will then conduct you to the spot whereon my secret must be told. I repeat to you, on the faith of a Christian man, that my secret contains nothing, which as a loyal and religious Scotchwoman, you may not lend hand and heart to.”

Colonel Ferguson held out his own hand as he spoke, and Miss Mackay, placing hers freely within it, renewed her promise of fidelity; promised to meet him at the hour he had appointed, trusting to her character and her purpose

for protection against future scandal ; and totally disclaiming all doubt of his honour and probity, she left him alone on the hill.

It may be supposed that Miss Mackay was somewhat agitated during the day, by the contemplation of this singular assignation ; but her confidence in the young laird's integrity, and her own consciousness of a generous motive, strengthened her to overcome those misgivings and apprehensions natural to her age and sex ; and to go through the ordinary business of the day, in Annie Ferguson's company, without betraying her internal disturbance.

The trio were sitting over a blazing fire of peat and bog-wood, hearkening at intervals to the surgy wind, and the hoarse murmurs of the distant sea, (as these sounds broke in upon one of Colonel Ferguson's narratives of his adventures abroad,) they were thus sitting, when the Castle clock striking ten, reminded Annie that it was time to separate for the night. Her brother's habits rendering early hours essential to him, and calling for lights, she prepared to lead the way to their separate chambers.

Miss Mackay felt her cheek blanch, as this moment warned her of the approach of one pregnant with danger ; but quickly rallying herself, she returned the Colonel's questioning glance with one of resolute confidence, and retired from the hall.

With the good sense peculiar to her character, Miss Mackay resisted a natural, yet fruitless desire of wasting the time she had to pass alone, in vain conjectures as to the nature of Colonel Ferguson's mystery ; she knew such indulgence could only be productive of pain and panic ; vexing the resolution it could not subdue, and destroying that composure of judgment which she wished to maintain and exercise, when called upon to consider the lawfulness of taking an active share in the matter proposed ; she therefore sat down and read till midnight.

Now and then, indeed, she turned her eye from her book to her large mullioned window, noticing the lights in the other windows of the castle disappearing one by one, till that whole side of the building became completely dark.

As the clock struck twelve, she threw on her wrapping plaid, and kneeling down for a few moments, in a short, earnest prayer, craved God's blessing and protection upon her, perhaps, rash enterprise. She rose from her knees

with a strengthened spirit ; and lightly descending the stairs, easily thrived the mazes of a long, intricate passage ; let herself out of a back door into one of the open courts ; whence she made her way through other deserted passages and roofless portions of the edifice, till she entered the remotest quadrangle belonging to the great tower, now completely abandoned of inhabitants.

The grasses of the court sighed to her steps and the sweep of her garments, as she passed swiftly through them. By the light of a small dark lanthorn, which she kept carefully turned in an opposite direction from the inhabited part of the mansion, she saw Colonel Ferguson was waiting for her.

In silence and respect he bowed his head as she came up to him ; and leading the way, proceeded to a door at the foot of the tower. This he opened with a small key ; and having entered at the bottom of a spiral staircase, locked the door, and turning towards her, asked her in a stifled voice, if she still felt confidence enough in him, to commit herself thus entirely to his honour, at such an hour ? If she felt one painful doubt, he prayed her not to go on. Miss Mackay's *heart of woman* failed her for a moment, as this interrogatory seemed to offer her immediate escape from a perilous adventure ; but ashamed of the dishonouring panic, she roused her spirits, and replying courageously, that she relied implicitly on him, followed up the winding stairs.

From the first landing-place they turned into a suite of apartments, which beginning in this tower, were continued along one remaining side of that part of the building which had formerly contained the state apartments. These were large and comfortless ; neither hangings nor furniture of any kind remaining in them. In some, the windows were entirely shaken out by the storms of successive winters ; in others, they were loose and shaking.

Miss Mackay was much struck by the desolation of these once magnificent apartments, contrasting them, as she did in her imagination, with what they must have been in the days of the Bruce ; and as she trod them, she could not forbear a sigh to the memory of times past, and of pleasures, in which she had never shared.

In the last chamber (which was smaller than the preceding one, and the windows of which were well secured, as if attention had kept them in order,) Colonel Ferguson stopped, locked the door, and warning Miss Mackay to remem-

ber all he did, pressed his foot upon the spring of a trap-door, which immediately started up. He then took the chilled hand of his passive companion (now seriously attentive,) and led her down a steep flight of stone stairs, into a vault evidently running far under the castle.

Here the young laird paused, and pointing to a large iron chest, prayed Miss Mackay would sit down, while he should explain all that she had witnessed, and try to secure her aid in a good cause.

It is not necessary to detail here all that Colonel Ferguson said; suffice it, that Miss Mackay heard, for the first time from his lips, that the exiled person, whom she, in common with most true Scotchwomen, considered as her lawful Prince, was on the point of entering Scotland, to head such an army as his friends might privily have collected; hoping successfully to dispute the crown with its existing possessor, the Elector of Hanover.

Colonel Ferguson had become known to his native prince while on the continent; and being solicited to join in an attempt to restore Charles Edward to what he believed his right, had, with much of youthful enthusiasm, directly entered into the scheme, and returned to Argyleshire, solely with views to that effect.

On his first settlement in Glenrowan, his hopes were strong; his confidence of success unbounded; for he believed every heart as truly disinterested and devoted as his own: but in the progress of his negotiation with the different noblemen and gentlemen who were to take an active share in the enterprise, Colonel Ferguson found so much lukewarmness in some; rashness in others; folly, selfish policy, and rottenness of principle; that at the first shock he too hastily despaired of efficient support from those, whose integrity and capacity ensured adherence unto death. His faculties became bewildered, so that he was not left sufficiently master of himself, to judge men's characters clearly. But he could not mistake that of the great chieftain in whose country his paternal estate was unluckily placed; and that chieftain being the firmest and noblest adherent of the Hanoverian dynasty, came ever on the eye of Colonel Ferguson as an evil genius.

His own overblown hopes were as hastily blighted as they had blown; until the most painful presentiments took

possession of his mind, as to the issue of an affair on which the honour and happiness of thousands depended.

When this change of feeling occurred, the laird's spirits and manners had naturally altered too. Foreseeing a fatal end to the enterprise ere it began, and conscious that his castle contained documents of vital importance to many, he was tormented with apprehensions for others, which he scorned to quail under for himself. In the iron chest, on which Miss Mackay sat, were deposited certain deeds and bonds from the great exile to different lairds and nobles, acknowledging the loan of moneys, or pledging himself to reward given services by future grants.

These documents, if discovered, together with a correct list of all the persons contributing to the cause, either by gold or vassals, might prove the ruin of some of the best and bravest on Scottish ground; and though several in that list were, in Colonel Ferguson's opinion, unworthy of an honest man's anxiety; for the generous many, who were freely, disinterestedly risking all that is dear to human heart in aid of their wandering prince, he was ready to incur any personal forfeiture.

Colonel Ferguson was aware, that either just before, or immediately upon his royal master's landing, he would be summoned to report certain needful details; and he feared leaving the high trusts committed to him, behind in the castle, (within the very grasp of Argyle,) without leaving some one also, authorized to destroy them during his absence, should disastrous circumstances render such a measure necessary.

When Miss Mackay's uncommon character first opened upon him, he was struck with the notion that Providence had thus provided him with a person fitted to receive such a confidence, and to co-operate with him afterwards, in all he had at heart. Under such an impression, he observed her more narrowly, and finally became confirmed in his early idea. At this critical period a summons arrived, commanding him to repair to the house of another staunch friend of the Stuarts, where Charles Edward's most confidential agent was hourly expected from France. At this eventful moment, Miss Mackay had herself opened the way to confidence, when his amazed spirits were all alarm at the instant call upon them, unprovided as he yet was with a faithful coadjutor. The opportunity was not lost upon him; and

he was now, with many expressions of high esteem, disclosing to her all that had so long weighed upon his own unsupported mind.

Miss Mackay's countenance, while Colonel Ferguson was speaking, encouraged the tale he told: she was evidently deeply interested; and the *leal heart* of a Scotch woman, warm, generous, self-devoting. (where she believed duty and loyalty demanded self-devotion,) sparkled in her fixed and speaking eye. The colour was restored richly to her cheek; and the high beating of her heart, (as the swelling and sinking of the plaid folding her bosom revealed its quick movements,) proved that in that heart there were confident hopes, as well as magnanimous resolution.

When Colonel Ferguson, in concluding, asked whether she would take upon her the charge of what he must leave behind him in the vault where they now stood; or, refusing that, simply give him her oath never to divulge to any one's detriment what he had just confided to her;—she replied cheerfully in the affirmative to the first; voluntarily binding herself never to reveal, while there could be danger to any individual by the disclosure, any part of what she had been listening to that night. Colonel Ferguson took her oath, pledged on her knees, over his pocket bible; then stooping to the chest from which she had risen, opened it, and displayed its contents.

“These leathern bags,” he said, pointing to several under his eye, “contain gold coin and jewels, contributed by faithful Scotchmen for the aid and support of their prince. This roll of parchment is the list of contributors; this contains bonds and pledges in the royal Charles Edward's own hand. Now, hearken carefully to my instructions concerning each deposite. I go, assuredly to bear arms under my prince's banner, if I find it raised in Inverness: when this gold is needed, I will send a trusty messenger for it, to whom you must deliver it, under the shadow of night, with your own hands: even at midnight you shall have no cause to fear insult or unseasonable jesting from such a messenger.—Old or young, I will pledge my honour for his.”

A maidenly blush stained Miss Mackay's cheek, as she bowed, in token of satisfaction; and Colonel Ferguson resumed. “The arrival of such a messenger will be notified to you by the figure of a cross cut on the trunk of the great

ash tree opposite your chamber window ; and the number of bags you are to give him, you will learn from the number of very small crosses directly under the large one. If, instead of money, he comes to announce defeat and disaster, you will see the figure of an axe in place of the cross ; and your business then will be to destroy every written paper or parchment in this chest. The gold itself can tell no tales, even to the quick-witted Argyle. After that, you may abide in or depart from this castle as you please, for then all will be over ; and its master most likely, lying a mangled corpse on a battle field."

Colonel Ferguson's voice faltered at this part of his discourse, for he thought of his young and unconscious sister : he passed his hand once or twice over his eyes, then resumed in a kindly tone : " Do not think that I forget your safety, my dear Miss Mackay ! (he took her hand with respect and tenderness.) I trust that, as all will depend upon your presence of mind, I am justified in believing there is no ground for apprehending evil to you. Shrouded in your plaid, not even the faithful gentleman whom I hope to charge with my commission, may discern your features ; nor can he know your voice accurately, as only a sort of pass-word need be exchanged. After he has carved his signal, (which, should he chance to be observed, may well pass for a traveller's idle sport,) he will repair at midnight to the door at the foot of these stairs. You will, therefore, proceed thither time enough to have previously executed your part of the perilous duty ; and, as the clock strikes twelve, you will go down to the door, (of which he will not have a key, and there you will find him waiting. Ere you unfasten the door, let the words 'Bruce' and 'Charles Edward' be mutually exchanged ; you may then open it with safety. You will then silently place the treasure-bags in his hand ; he will place a voucher for them in yours, and depart. This voucher you must carry back to the vault, and leave it in lieu of the gold. After this, you may return home at your leisure.

"Should, however, my messenger come to announce the necessity of destroying the written documents, you can burn them, by lighting them at the candle of your lanthorn, in the vault itself. Mark, mark, I pray you, all the peculiarities of the places you will have to pass through, as we return now, so that nothing may embarrass you, even should

accident extinguish your light. Above all things, remember to leave the trap-door well settled on its supports, as it opens only from the outside ;—for God's sake be careful to observe this."

Miss Mackay promised attention to every particular ; recapitulating to herself, very distinctly, the principal details of his instruction.

"And now, Colonel Ferguson," she said, in a tone of kindness, somewhat tinged with sadness, "should any evil betide yourself, which God forbid, how am I to know it, and what would you wish me to advise your sister to do ? In such sad case, be assured I will abide by her to the last. Whilst I am mine own, I will be here ; trying to supply by my longer experience of this world's ways, and by a calmer frame of mind than her then distressed one, the place of her most worthy brother."

Colonel Ferguson wrung Miss Mackay's hand in both his, with a feeling of gratitude too strong for words : tears stood in his eyes. Without otherwise thanking her, he replied at once to her question.—"If no suspicion has been roused concerning what is concealed here, and my poor Annie is left unmolested, let her remain here ; for this is her home,—the home of those before her. But, if my adherence to my born prince is to be visited as a crime upon her innocent head, at the very first sign of such disposition, carry her into Flanders, or Holland, and there see her peaceably boarded in some Protestant family, with all the money and family-goods, which you may manage to take with you. The course of her future life I must leave in the hands of a gracious God, who will, I pray, bless you Miss Mackay, for the comfort you are now affording to an affectionate and sorely-distressed brother."

Miss Mackay noticed this particular kindness to herself by a tearful smile ; then suggested, that his initials, carved on the ash tree, would be accepted as the sorrowful token of his death or captivity ; and remembering the lateness of the hour, proposed to follow him, and take note of his various movements. After ascending the steps of the vault, reclosing the trap door, learning the secret of the spring, and retreading their way through solitary chambers down to the foot of the tower, Miss Mackay received there the keys of the tower door, that of the trap-chamber, and the more



important one belonging to the iron chest. Benedictions were then exchanged whisperingly between her and her companion, who was to leave Glenrowan early next day; this done, they parted, pursuing separately a somewhat different way back to the inhabited quarter of the castle.

More than a fortnight elapsed after this, before Miss Mackay was called upon to execute any part of the commission with which the young laird had charged her. But, during that period, Colonel Ferguson wrote to his sister, excusing himself for prolonged absence, on the plausible pretext of a tour; and, agreeably with a concerted plan between them, Miss Mackay gathered from the form in which he wrote his signature, that Charles Edward's messenger was not yet arrived.

The innocent and ignorant Annie, gratified by the cheerful tone of her brother's letter, and remembering with pleasure his solicitous manner to her friend on the morning of his departure, neither guessed nor fancied any thing more occult in the epistle, than a little partiality intended to be displayed; she, therefore, handed it to her evidently-expectant companion, accompanying the action with girlish raillery at the obvious understanding between her and her brother.

Miss Mackay, comprehending her fancy, took the raillery in good part; happy thus to beguile the poor girl from any suspicion of the real case.

Not long after this, one morning, at the hour of rising, Miss Mackay, who regularly went to her window to examine the trunk of the ash tree, observed on it the concerted sign, a large cross with two smaller ones beneath; her heart stopt, and then throbbed quicker than before: it was some minutes ere she could compose herself sufficiently to descend to the breakfast room, and there talk and occupy herself as usual.

To be sure that she must go alone, at midnight, to the remotest part of the ruined castle, through deserted and undefended courts, and among ghastly chambers, the entrance to which she must lock after she had entered upon them, and thence descend into a gloomy vault, was sufficiently appalling to any woman. But when, in addition to this, Miss Mackay reflected that she must trust herself (momentarily indeed) to a strange man, perhaps rude in manner, coarse in feelings, and libertine in habits, she shuddered at her own

fool-hardiness, and with womanly delicacy arraigned herself for having consented to that part of Colonel Ferguson's arrangements. Continued reflection in some measure tranquilised her; as it assured her that such a person as Colonel Ferguson could have no friend that was not honourable, nor any selected agent who would not prove honest; added to this, she had the protection of a Power, which, I faithfully believe, never deserts us, till we abandon our better selves.

Half an hour before midnight, when all in the castle were buried in sleep, Miss Mackay lighted her lanthorn, took the keys she needed, and wrapping herself from head to foot in her plaid, issued from the dwelling-house into the first court.

The moon shone so brightly, that she had no occasion for the light she carried; and the night was so still, that she almost fancied that she heard the beating of her heart, as well as the sound of her light tread as she passed along.

In the last quadrangle, just as she opened the tower door, she turned round, and looking up at the sky, put aside the hood of her tartan cloak, addressing, as she did so in momentary prayer of the heart, the Creator of that splendid heaven, and of the peaceful earth on which she stood.

At that moment, an ill-suppressed sound, expressive of some strong feeling, (in another scene she might have deemed it one of admiration,) made her turn hastily towards the point whence it proceeded; a martial figure instantly stepped forward into the moonlight, from the shadow of an arched passage, uttering in a suppressed voice, with a respectful obeisance, the name of "Bruce."

Miss Mackay immediately acknowledged the messenger from Colonel Ferguson, by articulating "Charles Edward," and hurrying into the tower, locked herself tremblingly within it.

Even in this momentary glimpse of the person without, she thought his figure and bearing were those of a gentleman. The grace of his obeisance, nay, the very folding of his plaid, marked the high-born Highlander; his tartan also was that of the clan she most honoured: and with much of national pride and possible prejudice, believing herself safe with one of *gentle bluid*, she hastened to complete her task.

The moon shining directly upon the range of apartments she had to pass, lighted her securely through each; that

gracious light seemed an angel companion through such lovely chambers.

In the vault her lanthorn became useful ; and finding, from the weight of the treasure-bags, that she could not well convey two at once, she ascended at separate times with them, and separately deposited them at the foot of the stairs. As she opened the tower door not a word was uttered, as she exchanged those heavy purses with him without for a slip of parchment, acknowledging their receipt in the name of Colonel Ferguson.

Again she closed and locked the door, returning to the vault to deposite the voucher there ; then emerging from the tower, came forth into the sweet air with a heart thankful for the courage and protection heaven had lent her.

After this successful execution of the task imposed on her, Miss Mackay became more composed in her spirits ; therefore had no longer to contend against her own uneasiness, whilst trying to amuse and enliven her naturally fearful companion.

This, indeed, was no easy task ; for Annie Ferguson was afraid of ghosts, afraid of storms, afraid of lonesomeness. Whilst her brother was near, she believed, with a child's credulity, of its mother's power, that nothing could harm her ; but he away, she felt like a superstitious invalid deprived of his charm. She bewailed his absence too, not merely from the loss of his protection, but the loss of his dear society, and very soon refused comfort on the subject. From all this, Miss Mackay saw how rightly Colonel Ferguson had acted, by deciding against trusting his sister with his momentous secret ; the very affection and timidity of that tender-hearted girl would have rendered it impossible for her to have gone through the agitating duty which a firmer heart and hand had just executed.

The laird's absence crept on from week to week. Neither by private intimation, nor from public report, did Miss Mackay hear of the French agent's arrival in Scotland ; and her zeal in Charles Edward's cause made her suffer much anxiety in consequence.

Winter was now far advanced ; all its dreary sounds of dismal winds, screaming wild-fowl, together with the vexed boughs of leafless trees, were heard echoing through the glen : the paths were strewed with the ruins of many a summer bower, and, except the heavy Norway crow, and

the bright-eyed robin, not a bird remained to court its daily dole at the hand of Annie Ferguson.

Now began the season for long fireside evenings, and yet longer tales of witch, apparition, mysterious disappearance, and fearful murder! Miss Mackay vainly endeavoured sometimes to substitute for these a course of improving reading, or to circulate a more cheerful tone of conversation among the few families who came now and then, in pure charity, ten or twelve miles off, to visit "Annie Ferguson, pair body, that was left amaisht her lane by that daft chiel her brother."

Traversed by others, Miss Mackay's efforts were fruitless; and she herself often retired from these lugubrious conversations (for she was not beyond every female weakness) with sensations, which, if they were not absolute fear, amounted to uncomfortableness.

With such a feeling, she one night withdrew, after listening to a peculiarly awful story of presentiment fearfully fulfilled, as related by a maiden aunt of Annie Ferguson's over a dying fire. It was a most unlucky period for such impression, as Miss Mackay had in the morning received intimation, by a new sign on the ash-tree, that she was again required to visit the haunted part of the castle; for haunted of course, in common with all other deserted dwellings, it was said to be.

It was a dismal night. The roar of the distant sea was heard in the intervals of the still louder and more fearful wind; for the latter literally pealed like thunder through the mountain chasms.

The crash of trees, the fall of heavy fragments from the walls and towers of the castle, added to the din and the danger. Not a star was visible; every thing was covered with thick darkness.

Miss Mackay had a woman's heart, though it was of woman's highest order; and her's beat with a little personal fear, as she hurried under the tottering ruins and groaning trees; her greatest apprehensions soon arose from fancying some one was solicitously following her.

She thought she distinctly heard steps pursuing her's; quickening, relaxing, pausing, as her's did by turns. For one brief instant, the superstition of a person's own spirit following, to warn them of threatening death, crossed her

mind, and made her heart sick ; but quickly recovering, she pressed desperately onward.

Miss Mackay's entrance to the tower was now a relief to her ; any spot within walls seemed a shelter from the darkness and danger without. She locked the door with her former precaution, and carefully seeing that the candle in her lanthorn was in no risk of extinction, proceeded up the winding staircase.

Through the long suite of dark chambers she was obliged to traverse, howling blasts, like the voices of denouncing spirits, accompanied her, instead of that angel light which had appeared to bless and to sanctify her progress when she last trod the same floors.

Even the strong mind of Miss Mackay felt the influence of this change ; and her imagination soon peopled the gloomy void before her, though but at startling moments, with visionary shapes. She hurried breathlessly on, less fearful of losing her light by some sudden gust entering at the vacant window-frames, than of actually beholding some monstrous apparition.

Her hands shook a little as she lifted and settled the trap-door on its moveable rest ; but ere she had taken out and counted the bags of gold sent for by Colonel Ferguson, her nervous tremor began to subside.

She returned to the door at the foot of the tower successively with each load, with a far steadier step and calmer spirit than when she had entered it. Ere she opened the door, she exchanged the challenging words with the person without ; then placed the treasure in his hand and re-fastening the door, returned to deposit the receipt he had given her in the iron chest.

Miss Mackay now ran quickly through the many apartments leading to the vault ; for her lightened spirit gave elasticity to her body, and she smiled in gentle defiance on the fierce blasts as she descended the stone staircase.

Just as she was stooping to deposit the little document in the chest, a many-ringing crash, and then a thundering clap, made her start, and utter an exclamation of alarm. Her next action was to fly up the steps, which were vibrating from some great shock.

The trap door had fallen down from the force of the tempestuous wind, as it blew in the whole of the loosened window just over it ; smashing and scattering all its glass.

In à moment, Miss Mackay comprehended her misfortune; she endeavoured to push up the door again, whilst yet perhaps not firmly fixed, but it resisted her strongest efforts. Her wilder, nay, almost maddened, attempts were equally vain. She then hastened down for her lanthorn, by the light of which she hoped to discover the spring which secured the trap door; for though she remembered that Colonel Ferguson had asserted there was no opening the door from within, she trusted he might probably have exaggerated the danger of carelessness, only to make her more watchful over the whole concern.

The aid of her lanthorn was now useless; if she did indeed discover where the spring was situated, she found it equally immoveable as before. Again and again she made the trial; calling aloud for help between each agonizing failure. No voice answered her. The awful wind, pealing above the battlements, now with solemn continuity, now rushing with shrilly shriek through a thousand chasms and crannies of the ruin, were the only sounds that returned to her ear:—her feeble cry must be drowned in such a tempest.

That single human being who could alone have succoured her, perhaps, (the messenger from Colonel Ferguson,) must be now, she knew, too far beyond the precincts of the castle for any of its sounds to reach him; and if he were gone, (which he must be, if true to his duty,) ought she to summon other aid?

At this agitating question, Miss Mackay sunk upon the steps with the emotion of one who has received his sentence of death; her cry involuntarily ceased, whilst a cold dew spread all over her. A confusion of thoughts and feelings, of fears and resolutions, doubts and perplexities, crowded through her mind without her being able to fix one of them, so as to ascertain what would be right, what criminal. She saw that she must either risk the discovery of Colonel Ferguson's secret, together with the lives of all the persons concerned with him, or she must be content to remain and perish where she was.

Miss Mackay was of a truly heroic character: she could have met death on the scaffold in a good and great cause, as nobly as the bravest spirit that ever bent neck to the headsmen's axe; but a lingering and lonely death—death by inches, was a sacrifice almost beyond her strength, and she

contemplated it with a degree of horror. This was aggravated by a religious fear of being thus punished for presumptuous sin. It was possible that the Searcher of all hearts had found in her's, iniquity unsuspected or overlooked by herself—pride and self-consequence ; and for some time this fear awed her into passiveness.

But again human infirmity revived : once more she resumed, with earnest prayers resumed, her attempts at releasing herself ; and was as often forced, from alternate fatigue and conviction of its hopelessness, to abandon the attempt.

At length, quite exhausted, she left the steps, and throwing herself on the floor of the vault, from the damp of which her plaid in some degree protected her, endeavoured to compose herself, not to sleep, but to patience ; first commending her desolate state to the pity and protection of the only Being who could now rescue her ; and trusting that his mercy might enable her, when day dawned, to discover some mode of raising the trap.

It may be imagined that no slumbers visited Miss Mackay's aching eyelids : she lay listening to the dismal sounds without, watching the progress and decay of the storm, till by degrees the wind died wholly away, and heavy rain succeeded. Even in her dungeon she could hear it pouring in, through rifts in the roof, and splashing over the door of the trap. Comfortless as was this sound, it was more welcome to Miss Mackay than that of the wind, since it afforded some probability of her cries being heard, should her troubled mind eventually decide upon the lawfulness of calling for aid.

From the abatement of the storm, she could now hear the great clock of the castle ; she first heard it strike the hour of five. Morning was then begun, but it was a December morning, and it would be long ere broad day. The candle in her lanthorn was long since burnt out : she was in utter darkness. Hours crept on, till at length noon came ; but even so, not a gleam of cheering day penetrated to poor Miss Mackay : the door of the trap fitted so perfectly, that it left not a chink for a ray to enter ; and at this conviction all her terrors were renewed.

Another and another desperate attempt succeeded as the horn of a hunter on the hills came indistinctly on her ear, well nigh maddening her with its sound. Life, freedom,

were without, while she was perishing in a place where none would think to seek her.

With death thus before her, Miss Mackay thought of poor Annie Ferguson,—of Colonel Ferguson's grief, nay, remorse, when he should find that she had fallen a sacrifice to his fatal confidence ; and, for a few bewildering instants, during which she called piercingly and wildly for help, she fancied her death would weigh as heavily upon his conscience, as would have done the lives of those other persons for whom she was dying ; for they surely must have contemplated and accepted the probability of losing life in the cause they had embraced.

In such alternations of distraction and resignation, Miss Mackay wore out the whole of a day, every moment of which seemed aggravated into hours. Each hour, as it passed, diminished her strength and her hopes, for she had nothing to eat ; and that deathly sensation of complete exhaustion from want of food, began to overcome her, which precedes, in a delicate stomach, the sharper pangs of hunger. Towards night-fall a cold and benumbing sensation began to creep over her ; her head grew giddy, and she had the consciousness of a wandering in her mind, which alarmed her at herself.

Miss Mackay now raised herself on her knees, and with clasped hands, no longer wildly, impatiently wrung, but locked together in earnest supplication, implored mercy and mental strength from the Source of all good.

She first besought pardon for every sin of her past life ; then craved support under the heavy dispensation of the present hour. The will of her heavenly Father appeared to her too clearly indicated, for her to use further importunity on the subject of escape from it. With Christian humbleness, therefore, she prepared to receive and drink the bitter cup ordained for her by Him who knows what is best for his creatures.

Miss Mackay prayed long and fervently, though not in audible words ; for her tongue cleaved to the roof of her mouth, and her voice fell back with each effort to raise it. Every moment her head grew more dizzy, her limbs more benumbed ; a general stagnation of her blood and senses followed, and by degrees shut out sound, feeling, suffering, consciousness :—she fell, without knowing it, totally de-



prived of every thing like life, except faint breathing, upon the steps of the vault.

Miss Mackay's eyes were not closed for ever:—she opened them again, after the lapse of an hour;—saw the vault, a lanthorn burning before her on its floor, and a figure kneeling by her side, with a hunter's flask, with which he had just been moistening her lips and chafing her temples.

It was Colonel Ferguson himself, who had thus been providentially sent to her rescue.

Twenty-four hours after he had despatched his messenger to Glenrowan, one of the written documents in the iron chest became necessary, and he therefore set off himself, for the purpose of obtaining it. Having the master-key of all the apartments, and arriving at night-fall, he had neither time nor occasion for seeking Miss Mackay's assistance, so proceeded at once to the tower. There he meant to have left, with the receipt for the paper, a few lines, informing Miss Mackay of what he had done, and why he could not show himself in the castle. He had gone calmly on, as usual, through all the apartments; had stopped a few moments to observe the damage done to the windows of the last chamber, by the storm of the preceding night, and having lifted the trap, was descending its steps, when the bright tartans of Miss Mackay's plaid, shining under the light he held, made him start back.

The absence of other light than his own, her ghastly hue and stillness, at once proclaimed her miserable fate. He sprang down the remaining steps, immediately conceiving the cause of her situation, and, with happy presence of mind, poured into her lips a few drops of ardent spirits.

As this unwonted cordial began to renew warmth in the stomach, the heart resumed its action; and by slow degrees Miss Mackay recovered life and consciousness.

Ere Colonel Ferguson asked her any questions, he made her swallow a few morsels of the oaten cake with which he was provided for travelling; and when this also had produced a reviving effect, he briefly stated the purpose of his journey, devoutly acknowledging Heaven's goodness in thus sending him to her relief, and pledged himself to call upon her no more for a similar act of friendship and loyalty.

“Since I shall now take away with me all those dangerous documents,” he said, “the gold and my own private papers may be entirely trusted to the brave and well-trying

young chieftain, who has hitherto received them from your hands. He will henceforth come to this vault himself, as I shall direct him ; and the keys in your possession will therefore be transferred by me to him.

“Your dangerous office then ceases here, my dear Miss Mackay,” continued Colonel Ferguson, with much emotion, “and God be praised, ever praised, that I have not the weight upon my head, of having sacrificed your valuable life to my unwarranted demands upon a courage and kindness which I had no right to task thus.”

Whilst he spoke, Miss Mackay was on her knees, inwardly thanking the Almighty for her great deliverance : she had not heard a word he said ; but, upon his repetition of it, and reminding her that they must provide some plausible excuse for her long absence, she rose, bathed in relieving tears, and tried to calm her grateful spirit.

As her absence could only have been noticed since the breakfast hour, and as she was often in the habit of rambling before that meal, it might well be supposed that the stormy rain had kept her in some distant cavern or shealing, even till the present late hour ; because a renewal of the early morning's heavy rain had actually occurred very soon after the two hours of fair weather, which, it might be conjectured, had tempted Miss Mackay abroad.

It was now late evening, indeed dark evening ; but it was not absolute night ; and, sufficiently strengthened by another small portion of Colonel Ferguson's travelling fare, Miss Mackay prepared, with the support of his arm, to retrace her way to the house.

At the last court he left her, with many a whispered benediction and expression of regret that he might not accompany her into the house, and embrace his fond Annie. By the way he had informed Miss Mackay of all connected with his own mission, and thus enabled her clear unbiassed mind to calculate the probability of success or failure for the great enterprise in hand. She gave many sighs as they parted, to the doubtful prospects of her prince.

Though greatly alarmed at her friend's long absence, and at the return of various servants sent to seek her in accustomed haunts, Annie Ferguson easily credited the slight account Miss Mackay rather implied, than boldly told, concerning her detention by an accidental fainting fit, in a mountain hollow ; and, seeing her pale and shivering, occu-

ped herself so anxiously in administering to her imagined indisposition, that further particulars were not questioned. With many a tender caress, the affectionate girl saw her friend comfortably in bed; and having given a warm posset of her own making, left her to grateful rest.

Here Miss Mackay's share in the schemes of the Scottish lairds may be said to have terminated; for after this night's adventure, her services were no longer demanded.

Every one knows the fate of that disastrous enterprise. Colonel Ferguson never returned to his home; he fell bravely on the field of Culloden. Miss Mackay subsequently became the wife of the gallant Highlander who had shared with her in the secret of the tower.

This young chieftain's ardent imagination had at first been roused by Colonel Ferguson's description of her magnanimous courage and devoted loyalty; his senses were easily captivated afterwards, by the view he had of her person, under the embellishing light of the moon; and the finishing stroke was put to her conquest of him, by the mixed anxiety and admiration with which he had silently protected, by following her through the raging elements of a night ever memorable to both.

After they married, Annie Ferguson, sad and bereaved, yet still clinging to some loved support, accompanied the well-matched pair abroad, where they all lived for many years in such happiness as this mixed world can afford, even to the best and happiest. When all hope ceased of the Stuarts' restoration, Annie deemed it her duty to return and take up her abode among her own people in Glenrowan. There she spent a somewhat pensive life; for pious sentiments strengthening with her age, kept it from being a melancholy one. She never married; but dedicated her few powers of mind, and many excellent qualities of heart, to the solace and succour of all within her reach. At Glenrowan she was occasionally visited by her faithful friends and their children; and there, when the brown hair of my heroine was gray, did that heroine herself relate the tale I am now telling, with lively gratitude for her mighty deliverance.

# LORD HOWTH,

AN IRISH LEGEND,

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There are more things in Earth and Heaven, Horatio,  
Than are dreamed of in your philosophy. *Shakspeare.*

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EVERY one who has entered the beautiful bay of Dublin, knows the hill of Howth. That hill formerly gave its name to an ancient and honourable Irish family : the title is now extinct ; ending in the person of the hero of my present tale.

The marvellous circumstance which marked Lord Howth's life, and influenced its happiness, ought to have occurred and been narrated at a much earlier period to obtain general credit : for how few in the nineteenth century will allow themselves the indulgence of credulity. Thanks, however, be to nursery impressions, there yet exists a certain class of persons, desirous of preserving the dear illusions of childhood ; willing, as able, to transfer Reason's sceptre into the hand of Imagination ; and ever best pleased when most cheated.

Into such persons' ears, I whisper the following history, as it is now gathered from the lips of many, dwelling on lands once annexed to the barony ; creditable peasants, who profess to have heard it from their grandfathers, contemporaries with the hero of the legend.

The last Lord Howth was said to have been one of the handsomest and most accomplished men of his day ; he was young, spirited, generous, and intellectual ; nobly hospitable, without countenancing those table-excesses then common in Ireland ; and remarkable for the ardour of his attachments. But the young lord had great faults ; he felt an impatience under ridicule, which sometimes endangered his moral habits ; and he was often the prey of nervous superstition. Lord Howth read poetry, wrote poetry, nay more, he felt poetically ; who may wonder then, that he should

be susceptible of such pains as have their root in imagination.

His most grievous fault was so jealous and irritable a temper, that his friends (like Bosworth Field) were perpetually lost and won several times in one day. Agonies of shame and contrition ever followed his violences, it is true ; but even these virtuous emotions sometimes occurred too late for reparation of injury, or for reconciliation with the offended ; and the offender, consequently, had not unfrequently, to deplore affections overthrown, never to take root and bear fruit again. Lord Howth was in his twenty-sixth year, and in the meridian of fame public and private, (for he was distinguished in the senate,) when he came down, with a party of chosen companions, to Roskerry, a favourite residence on the sea-coast.

He was wearied by a long session in Dublin : some important matters had been agitated in the two houses of parliament there, in which he had taken a deep and active interest ; and the failure of one of these had chafed him beyond endurance. He was wearied too, by the most wearying of all things,—a regular chase of himself, by half the manœuvring mothers and heartless daughters in the beau monde of Ireland.

I am quite sure that it is needless to describe here, in what the agony and torment of such a chase consists. The rich or noble victim singled out of the general herd for this purpose, has pursuers let loose upon him from twenty different quarters at once ; is now whistled at, now halloed to, hunted from party to party, with a persevering ardour which allows him not a moment's rest ; chased over all sorts of snares and pitfalls, purposely made to catch him ; and at last is fairly obliged to resign himself to his hunters and his fate, from mere lack of breath or of ground,—rarely does any unhappy wretch, thus hunted, retain vigour enough to turn upon his pursuers and rend them ; nor even to stand at bay, till he may vault over their heads, and plunge into some saving water.

If any of my present readers have been one of these disastrously distinguished creatures, doubtless his flesh is creeping now, at the bare remembrance of his past sufferings. Let him then sympathize with my hero, as the latter breathed the free air of his native mountains ; muttering to him-

self, "thank heaven, I am rid of my lady Loch-Erin, her dancing daughter, and all the rest of them!"

The first week or two of Lord Howth's residence at Roskerry was almost rapturous; so vividly did he enjoy his liberty and his own good-humour;—as he was a bachelor, and his only sister married in another kingdom, he had no lady belonging to him; it was therefore impossible for any of the neighbouring families to quarter themselves and a pretty daughter upon him, by way of turning Dublin assaults into a close siege—he gave no greensward balls, no tea and syllabub parties, with some friendly matron presiding.—Quite sick of young ladies, he wisely left his disgust to subside, ere he should enter again into society; secretly hoping, (for Lord Howth had a heart capable of deep, devoted attachment,) that his better fortune might one day present him with such a being as his fancy pictured, and his heart sighed for.

Lord Howth's companions at Roskerry were young lively men; some of them men of talent, gifted with those capacities of enjoyment which enable us to find pleasure in every thing from which harmless amusement may be extracted.—Lord Howth himself was remarkable for the power of giving an inspiring impulse even to dulness itself, when he was in the mood for doing so. The shooting, hunting, and water parties in Roskerry were therefore uncommonly agreeable; as the last named parties were made on the open sea, and in defiance of weather, there was danger as well as pleasure in them; and in consequence, (such is man's intuitive love of hazard,) marine expeditions became popular among the inmates of the mansion.

Once or twice these bold and somewhat ignorant mariners were nearly lost, when Lord Howth's life was saved, simply by his presence of mind; from that moment he practised swimming as a sort of duty, till he acquired perfect dexterity in that highly useful art.

As the season advanced, however, bringing more serious storms along with it, all aquatic diversions were unavoidably relinquished. This was a subject of much regret to Lord Howth, who had a peculiar repugnance to any exercise which inflicted pain upon another living thing; and though too much awed by ridicule to own the weakness, never witnessed the death of a deer, or saw the fluttering fall of a bird, without an inward shudder.

Sometimes he did venture to say, that whoever might do it, it did not become *him*, who was so often wounding by his quick temper, to cause suffering of another sort; and such an explanation never had been received with scorn.

After a month's residence at Roskerry, how to fill up vacant time and vary amusement, became a question:—it was proposed to turn woodmen; and assist in removing sundry graceless trees, which over-grew an old water-mill on the estate. This most picturesquely-beautiful object (the study of many a wandering sketcher,) was a favourite haunt of Lord Howth's; who loved, in his moods of melancholy and poetry, to retire to its steep and wooded banks, and there, thrown upon the bright-green moss, watch the successive falls of the stream over its broken and grotto-like bed. He would lie for hours there; sometimes lulled into a sweet stupor by the monotonous din of the wheel; sometimes awakened into busy fancies by the sparkling of its wirling water.

Wishing to render this spot perfect in romantic beauty, Lord Howth proposed removing certain slight disfigurements, which scarcely any but his tasteful eye would have observed; and for this purpose providing himself and his associates with saws and bill-hooks, he set off one fine October morning for the mill.

The sound of vigorous and often random strokes was soon heard echoing through the solitudes round; the blunders of some of the wood-cutters, the happier hits of others, became alternately the subjects of gay jest and eager betting; while all clamoured for a vote in the destruction or preservation of different trees, which their proprietor either condemned, or denied to the axe.

A fresh autumnal air stood in the stead of wit-awakening Champagne; and perhaps never had this small groupe of animated young men been what is called "*better company*," than whilst roaming among the banks of a nameless stream, without fair eye to admire, or fair ear to hear them. Each person plied his separate task with careless hilarity; shouting across the water to each other from banks (where they stood leg-deep in luxuriant grasses,) many a diverting sally, or ridiculous quotation.

One of the idlest was resting beside Lord Howth, while the latter was settling the question of how much was to remain of a scathed maple, when a rat peeped up from the

water's edge, then ran across into a screen of flowering flags, where it sat ensconced, quietly looking on at the woodmen.

Water-rats are proverbially hideous ; but this rat was unusually small and delicate : its body was of silvery gray, striped by a few lines of glossy black, and its little eyes sparkled with diamond brilliancy.

As the creature sat confidently looking on, Lord Howth audibly noticed its prettiness and fearlessness ; his companion instantly cheered a terrier, to run and fetch it out. In cold blood the sight of taken life was intolerable to Lord Howth, and on the instant he jumped over the narrow stream, seized the dog, which, dropping the shrieking rat, turned fiercely upon his detainer. Lord Howth's coarse jacket saved his arm. How wrathfully he chastised the terrier, I will not for his temper's sake describe : the rat was rescued, and ran nimbly away ; a few spots of blood, however, were visible on its silver coat, as it darted into the shelter of the bulrushes, causing Lord Howth to exclaim vehemently against the wanton sport which thus delights in terrifying or destroying, solely for selfish entertainment.

The person in question luckily took the dressing, in contrite good-humour : owned his barbarous levity ; and resumed his occupation ; as he did not even put in a word for his dog, the thundering cloud on Lord Howth's brow dispersed. So trifling an incident of course was forgotten long before the day closed ; a social supper, (for at that period suppers were in fashion,) banished all remembrances that were not agreeable ; and when our hero retired to his own chamber, he went in the most harmonious frame of mind.

His lordship was accustomed, when in the country with guests whom he must live with much through the day, to redeem lost time, by reading for two or three hours every night. He now detained his valet but a moment ; exchanged his coat for a dressing gown ; and sat down with a huge folio before him, for what is termed *stiff reading*.

Happening to turn his eyes towards the further end of the apartment, they were fixed by something glittering in a corner ; at first he took it for a diamond, dropt perchance out of his dress sword's hilt, and he was rising to ascertain the fact, when the sparkling object moved ; and he then perceived, that the small bright light belonged to the eyes



of a living creature. The next instant the object in question, jumped through the aperture in the oaken panel, whence it had been watching him, and ran nimbly over the floor, towards his feet.

Lord Howth drew back; for with all his tender regard for the humble creation, he had a natural aversion to a rat; an aversion which probably had its rise in a tradition often repeated to him when in the nursery; namely, that the last of the Howth family should owe his death to one of that species. As my hero drew back, the rat paused and looked up at him with what Lord Howth's poetical imagination pleased to call a grateful expression; be that as it may, his fancy was now struck, and he kept still.

Again the creature ventured to approach; making a movement, which directing notice to its back, Lord Howth then observed three small blood spots, so distinctly resembling those he had seen on the rescued rat of the morning, that he had no hesitation in believing this to be the same animal; and his astonishment at the sense and sentiment of a rat, therefore, became excessive.

The creature glided yet nearer; his lordship retreated; the rat timidly retreated in her turn, yet not as if in fear; for her little bright eyes remained fixed upon her preserver, and all her movements seemed to indicate a wish of testifying gratitude. By degrees Lord Howth got amused by her nimble advances, and sudden checks; and interested by the uncommon circumstances of her first finding her way to the house, and then into his particular chamber, and that from such a distance as the mill-stream.

A common plain-sense man would have found such a miracle much harder of digestion, than the obvious notion that this was a different rat, which accident had wounded in a similar manner with the object of his late humanity. But Lord Howth had more romance than common sense, wherever feeling was concerned; and he now triumphed in this confirmation of a creed avowed, and acted up to, that he believed all living creatures to be more or less endowed with a rational principle;—soul, he presumed not to call it.

After some time passed in a sort of advancing and shrinking from Lord Howth's notice, the rat slowly withdrew towards the panel whence she entered; and then, after another long gaze at her preserver, instantaneously disappeared.

The next morning, of course, this adventure was related, with much boasting of his own just estimate of the inferior creatures' capacities. Roars of laughter naturally greeted the story; but as his lordship joined in these himself, mirth was not embittered; and he therefore magnanimously persisted in asserting that it was the rescued rat which had tracked him to the house, and crept to his room in token of gratitude. She had the same stripes, he said, of jet black, down the gray of her skin; her whiskers, too, were as remarkable for length, her eyes for brilliancy,—in short, he was determined to believe that it was his rat, and no other.

Lord Howth's notion of brute sentiment, however, did not carry him so far as to make him imagine he should ever see his rat again. What then was his surprise, when, on entering his chamber for the second, third, fourth, nay, for other nights in succession, he found himself revisited by this singular animal!

Aware that a repetition of the matter would subject him eventually to the annoyance of becoming the subject of invidious remark and possible sarcasm, Lord Howth refrained now from mentioning his nocturnal visiter; although by this time, he and the rat were grown so sociable, that the latter would sit the whole time her preserver was reading, perfectly still, gazing at, and waiting by him; and the other would often pause over his book, to utter some laughing ejaculation at the absurdity of being so admired by a rat.

Every night the rat's visitations were of longer duration, till at length they extended through the night, even until the hour of Lord Howth's rising, and going into his dressing-room; thither the delicate-minded rat never followed.

One morning, to his lordship's astonishment, it suddenly appeared in the eating-room, just as the party were going to sit down to breakfast. "Egad, there's your rat, my lord!" "Is not that your rat, Howth?" "Look at old whiskerandos!" "By Jove, it is little moustache!" These, and other such exclamations, were at the same moment uttered by Lord Howth's company, as amidst peals of immoderate laughter, they saw the creature glide past, and settle itself at its preserver's feet.

Contradictory opinions were then given as to whether it was or was not the same rat that had been in the terrier's jaws, on the morning of their wood-cutting frolic. The greater number of votes being for the first opinion, it was

agreed, *nem. con.* that henceforth their noble host should be privileged in not only telling the wonderful story, but swearing to it, and subpoenaing them all as witnesses.

From this day, the singular little animal appeared to have enrolled herself in the list of domestic things at Roskerry ; for she was soon seen in every room its master frequented ; his presence was her protection, till by degrees even the dogs that were admitted to such privileges, permitted her to usurp their place on the rug before the fire, and the first morsel from the hand of their lord.

Whilst his visitors remained with him, our hero was less engaged by the pertinacious attachment of his rat ; but when they were gone, and he was left for some winter weeks solely alone, his solitary heart attached a real value to the affectionate gaze of those small bright eyes, which seemed to live on his looks ; and whenever he re-entered his house after a long ride, or a day's botanizing, he felt something of pleasurable emotion at the welcome of his rat. She was now always in attendance, ready to spring from a small lodgment in the wainscoat of the hall, where she prudently entrenched herself during his absence, fond to show her joy by playing round his steps.

Those, who with warm and yearning hearts are condemned by circumstances to lonely lives, can well understand this minor sort of attachment. Any eye which humbly, fondly, waits and watches ours ; any living thing to which we really appear the sole object of affection, becomes, in time, of consequence to our happiness. Is it not sweet to have the power of brightening and blessing another's existence, even though that existence be the brief and dimly-read one of an inferior animal ?

Under such impression, the elegant and admired Lord Howth often laid down his book, when alone in his library, to play with his strange favourite, whose light and agile movements really were as graceful as amusing. Sometimes he would catch himself talking to her of the wintry blasts, or the cheering sunshine, as if she could understand his observations.

At length other duties summoned my hero to the capital ; and as he knew that his stay there would be of some months' continuance, he was unwilling to leave his little playmate without securing a means of knowing it again ; for of course the blood spots had long since disappeared, and its identity was only ascertained to him by its every day appearance.

Lord Howth's natural antipathy to the rat species was not so wholly conquered, as to prevent him from a qualm and shudder, whilst he lifted the little creature to his knee, and then fastened a gold thread round one of its legs.

The rat suffered him to fasten it with apparent satisfaction, rubbing her little head gently against the hands employed in the office, and raising her bright eyes to his, dimmed by a moisture, which Lord Howth fancied must be tears. He could feel the panting of her heart, as he held her with a gentle grasp; nay, could hear a low plaintive moan, mixing with her quick breathings. It is needless to own, that while he did so, he sincerely shared his poor favourite's sorrow—the next moment he laughed, or rather thought he laughed at it.

However, as scores of men have done upon far more serious occasions before him, he resolved not to think more about his rat or her grief, but leave her to manage as she might, while he made himself happy elsewhere.

Lord Howth went to Dublin: there he was again engulfed in politics and pleasure: there again he was chased by Lady Loch-Erin and her daughter, and twenty other shark-like mothers and daughters. During two weeks, that giddy hurry of business and amusements, which always whirls us out of ourselves at first, in a metropolis, became familiar to him; and he then had leisure to think of former events: Whilst doing this, he one day detected himself wondering what had become of his rat, and whether she had been fed and protected as he left charge for? the next day he wished he could see the poor little thing.

As if in compliance with such a wish, that very night, after he had dismissed his attendant, a rat ran out from the foot of a screen, with a small joyful cry. Even without the gold thread round its leg, Lord Howth would have recognised his own rat. The feeling of pleasure with which assuredly he saw the faithful little creature again, and welcomed her pretty caress, was more than balanced by his extreme astonishment at her appearance there. It was unaccountable. She must have travelled at least forty miles, and after that, crossed the busiest streets in Dublin. She must therefore be as strong, as sagacious, as clever at road-finding and master-tracking, as any dog upon record: and as the gold thread put her identity beyond doubt, he

became lost in wonder at the unsuspected intelligence of this very inferior order of animal.

Lord Howth in Dublin, was however a different man from Lord Howth at Roskerry; and already getting sore with the bantering of his acquaintance about Lady-Olivia Loch-Erin's *determined set at him*, he resolved not to expose himself to ridicule upon a new subject, by relating this additional proof of sagacity and affection in a rat.

As the rat discreetly kept the house, and kept in the back-ground when visitors were announced, my hero was able to keep his secret awhile; but in time, some of his Roskerry party happening to call and catch a glimpse of his strange attendant, as it glided behind a book-stand, immediately challenged its acquaintance; asked questions, extracted answers; and now, seeing their embarrassing effect, amused themselves by proceeding.

Lord Howth's natural irritability of temper threw him off his guard; and one *excellent good fellow*, thus discerning where and how to torment, tailed not to exercise his power.

It soon became the fashion after this, amongst inveterate quizzers, to surprise Lord Howth and his rat at their meals or at their studies; and more than once he caught the murmured sounds of "Tasso and his familiar, Saint Anthony and his Pig," circulating round, till he was tempted to expose the infirmity of his temper to its utmost, by suddenly knocking the jester down. Even though he taught his little admirer to keep out of sight when he had dinner parties, he rarely gave a dinner without being asked by some silly person, or by some underbred stranger intending to *toady* him, whether he would not favour them with a sight of his wonderful rat? Ladies asked him, if it never followed him into the senate or to church? if he was quite sure he did not fancy the whole affair? In short, long ere the Dublin season ended, Lord Howth was worked up to phrenzy, by a sort of conspiracy (formed for mere sport's sake) against his peace and temper: for if he went to balls and assemblies to escape remarks for staying at home, he was hunted by Lady Olivia, and covertly complimented by her partisans, upon their evidently mutual inclination. And if to avoid her, he remained at his own house, he was assailed by quizzing notes, and calls of inquiry, to know if he or his rat were sick.

At length he was so weary of bridling his rage, (for to

absolute rage did such ridicule work him,) that he manfully resolved to cut both Lady Olivia and the rat, and at once quit the kingdom.

Having arranged all his concerns, intending to travel on the continent for at least a twelvemonth, he made a few hasty farewell visits to real friends; and one fine morning, was just setting off for the boat in which he was to join the Dublin packet, that was to convey him first to England, when a set of his most thoughtless acquaintance came, as they said, to see him off.

Lord Howth had stroked, and patted, and looked at his poor rat, as he thought, for the very last time; since it was not probable that the creature, left to the mercy of hirelings while he was far away, would long remain alive; still less that she should be attracted back to Roskerry, where its master would no longer be found.

He could not utter the simple words of "Fare you well, my poor little pet," to the almost motionless and sad-seeming animal, without an inward pang; and the consciousness that he was weakly influenced to this abandonment of a helpless creature, so unaccountably, yet so evidently, fond of him, aggravating his regret by mixing it with self-contempt, increased his vexation at the persons who jested him out of sense and humanity.

He had just pronounced his short adieu, when the party of saunterers were announced. Annoyed beyond measure, he hurried to meet them on the threshold, under pretence of having no time to lose: instead of inviting them into the house, he asked them, inconsiderately, to ride with him.

On the way, among other topics of vague chat, two such similar persecutions as those of Lady Olivia and the rat were handled. Lord Howth well knew, that a high-bred man who cannot stand ridicule, and return it with careless composure, is viewed with equal contempt as the soldier who runs from an enemy's fire. He knew also, that were a quarrel and a duel to spring out of his sensitive notice of the present jesting, he would be laughed at by all the world. He therefore devoured his indignation, while ludicrous situations were imagined for him and his two enamoured persecutors; and wit, rather sharper than bright, flashed round his head.

Much amusement to his associates was the effect of one of the party seeking seriously to affright Lord Howth by the family prediction : but to this prediction, my Hero listened with stoical apathy ; a composure which was not destroyed till arriving at the water side, and waiting for the boat, he saw his rat suddenly appear, panting and dust-soiled, and scarcely able to drag her wearied little form towards him. She had then tracked him from the Phoenix Park !

At this touching conviction, Lord Howth, with a natural burst of feeling exclaimed, " Ah ! my poor little thing, what am I to do with you ? " The laughter of his companions was now boisterous ; they assailed his lordship with such repeated bursts of it, that in a transport of irritation he leaped into the boat, authoritatively commanding the boatmen to row from shore.

Ashamed the next instant to order the boat back, he yet felt almost guilty of a crime, when, the gust of passion ended, he looked to the beach where he had thus abandoned his favourite ; at every stroke of the oars his sensations became more uncomfortable, and less easily borne.

We are certainly never so odious to others as when we are at enmity with ourselves ; and Lord Howth, now in his blackest humour, promised to be most particularly disagreeable as a fellow passenger. This, however, did not deter one of his offending acquaintance, who had unluckily taken a passage for England in the same packet, from following in another boat, and taking possession of his own birth.

With such a companion, Lord Howth's sullen mood lasted during the whole twenty-four hours of their voyage. At the termination of that short period, our Hero, with other gentlemen passengers, found himself seated at a comfortable meal in the inn at Holyhead.

After the meal, they were watching the coming in of another small vessel, which had sailed nearly at the same time with the packet, and was now entering the port, when the tormentor suddenly exclaimed,

" What will you bet, Howth, that neither Lady Olivia nor your rat are come over in that smack ? I'll take any odds you like."

" My life against yours, Sir, neither of them : " was the angry answer, at the moment Lord Howth was examining a large shell he had taken off a slab. At the same instant a rat, or mouse, put its head out from a hole in the skirting board of

the room. Enraged by this ridiculous coincidence, Lord Howth hurled the shell from him with furious violence; it struck the creature as it was leaping forth, and laid it instantly dead on the floor.

But the poor little animal had both looked and cried ere it dropt. Its dying cry made Lord Howth shudder. He sprang forward with boding alarm, and seeing that it was in fact his own rat which now lay bathed in its blood before him, he turned upon the young man whose folly had provoked him to this, with the frenzy of a madman. Most assuredly he would have sacrificed him on the spot to his blind vengeance, had not other persons interfered, and preserved Lord Howth from heavier guilt than that which he now bewailed.

His frenzy of distress was in fact so equal with that of his wrath, that compassion and regard mixed with the disapprobation of the by-standers. The offending young man was so effectually touched by what he saw, that he shrunk not from owning the feeling, and soliciting Lord Howth's pardon. This was reluctantly granted, upon condition that, instead of pursuing the remainder of their journey together, they should separate here.

Some business requiring our hero's presence in London, he proceeded thither; staid there only till that was finished; then hastened to Dover, crossed into France, and for two years traversed the finest parts of the Continent.

But Lord Howth was no longer the same animated and animating person: the dying look and dying cry of his poor little pet haunted his sleeping and waking hours, alloying those intellectual pleasures, which of all men Lord Howth was the best fitted to find and to enjoy on the classic ground of Italy and Greece. He wandered beneath the giant shadow of the Coliseum, and stood on the silent plain of Marathon, with feelings withered and blighted by self-condemnation.

He arraigned himself perpetually, not for the mere unintentional act of murder, (as he strongly called the destruction of his rat.) but for that criminal indulgence of an infirm temper, which, so indulged, might equally have led to the destruction of a human being. To be sure, the blow which had given death, had been merely the senseless action of one beside himself; yet, it must be guilty, since it had immediately brought its own punishment, by depriving him,



in the most cruel way, of the unoffending little creature that loved and followed him. Added to this, there was bitterness in the idea, that people might ascribe the act to fear, in consequence of the old prediction concerning his family.

Alternately tormented by these two notions, Lord Howth gradually became gloomy and capricious: he travelled alone: saw every note-worthy object alone; shunned amusements; and very soon totally lost his health.

At the end of two years he was, indeed, so ill, that he was advised to return to Ireland, and see what native air would do for him.

To his native air, therefore, Lord Howth returned, establishing himself once more at Roskerry.

But to Roskerry the gay and thoughtless were no longer invited. Its master felt his aversion to such society unconquerable; for was it not in a similar circle that he had received his heart's wound?

As Lord Howth's body weakened, his mind also lost its healthful tone. Feeling and imagination became more active in him, so that he might truly be said to be dying of regret and superstition. Finding all his reasoning powers insufficient to banish the notion of blood-guiltiness which haunted him, he had begun to admit a suspicion, that in his person the old prediction was destined to have fulfilment; and the more he measured his disproportionate regret with its object, the more he became convinced that it was something beyond nature and nature's laws.

From that period Lord Howth ceased to struggle against his malady and his melancholy, though he struggled more vigorously than he had ever before done with his propensity to anger. His duties as a man and a great land proprietor became of higher importance in his eyes, and his performance of them far more a matter of conscience, than of such ambition as had heretofore led him to distinguish himself in the senate and at public meetings. He was evidently more seriously impressed with the sense of future accountability, and with those awful truths which, perhaps, ought not to be named in a tale like this.

Be this as it may, my hero's character was obviously improved by suffering; for he indulged less in solitary pleasures than he had selfishly done when a happier man; read little; wrote little; devoting the time taken from merely

elegant pursuits, to the more active employment of an improver and a magistrate. His estate soon promised a rich harvest for his inheritors ; while the country at large as well as his tenantry, saw schools, hospitals, and alms-houses, rising up for their comfort and instruction. The founder of these benevolent institutions felt his heart soothed, if not healed, by the sight of others enjoying benefits flowing from his hand.

Lord Howth's return to his estate, together with the altered state of his health and spirits, was of course the talk of town and country. The strange story of his rat was often related, but soon without levity ; for nearly all persons agreed in believing that the young lord's present condition was wholly attributed to that extraordinary circumstance. Rational folk resolved his state into the operation of remorse and an easily excited imagination. Superstitious ones simply believed that in him the prediction was now fulfilling. Among those inclined to the latter opinion, was Mrs. Florence O'Grady, his maiden aunt ; a lady, who no sooner heard of her nephew's return and state of mind, than she repaired to Roskerry, and, self-invited, took up her residence within its walls.

Mrs. Florence was a kind excellent hearted woman, of "few words" and "no ways." There was nothing in the long visit of such a person to alarm even the saddest or surliest ; and her nephew, therefore, received her with grateful affection.

With the tact of genuine feeling, the worthy spinster soon discovered, that if she hoped to win Lord Howth from his melancholy, she must neither preach to him, nor plague him, nor rack him with questions ; but, watching to see what sort of pleasure pleased him most, thus find out the way of multiplying his enjoyments.

She quickly discovered, that for him now, pleasure was only to be sought in objects of usefulness ; and she displayed no contemptible talent at furnishing him with opportunities of pursuing this his laudable taste.

To restore his bodily health she concocted various medicaments and diet-broths. Lord Howth had not the ingratitude to refuse taking them from the withered hand which waited his moody pleasure in patient kindness. His health, therefore, did not continue to decline as it had done at first, when, loathing all nourishment from the heart's sickness,

he had none by, to look him into a consciousness of his criminal self-indulgence.

A portion of his original strength now returned ; and, if he recovered not the full energy of his mind, at least he acquired the power of masking a sad spirit by an occasional smile.

It was now autumn : October was just concluding, bringing the third anniversary of the day upon which my hero had first seen the poor little victim of his unbridled temper, the object now of his almost fond remembrance.

Instead of wasting this day in dejected loneliness, as he had done its predecessors, Lord Howth now spent it in active charity ; so that it was only after his early dinner with Mrs. Florence, that he allowed himself the luxury of a solitary ramble along the sea-shore.

Tradition does not say whether Lord Howth shed tears or gave sighs only to the memory of his favourite, as he slowly traversed the rocky beach, under a sky of portentous gloom. To a certainty he was sad and thoughtful, and he roused not till his eye caught sight of a small vessel, with all her rigging torn, driving directly upon the rocks of the coast. The next moment he saw the flash of her distress-gun ; the sound he could not hear, for the storm drowned it, along with the cries of the unfortunate mariners.

My hero, who till this moment had neither heard the blowing wind, nor was conscious that his steps were officiously, yet kindly, watched by one of his tenants, now saw the man, and called on him to assist in getting out a boat, and summoning additional help.

Even while his commands were obeying, and he himself eagerly assisting, the sloop (which, from rounding a point, had come on them like an apparition) first struck against a rock ; then went down under a heavy sea. She sunk before his eyes with fearful stillness.

But one human form was seen floating upon the waves after the vessel sunk ; it was that of a woman, whom Lord Howth had seen throw herself into the water as the sloop struck.

Still impatient and impetuous, my hero leaped into the boiling sea ; and, as it happily drove the female form towards him, he succeeded in catching at her white garments, and dragging her through a tremendous surf to land.

The lady appeared quite dead ; but Lord Howth, anima-

ted by the hope of being allowed to restore a life during this day, on which he bewailed having taken one, as if endowed with supernatural strength, hurried with her in his arms to his own house, and there, by the aid of Mrs. Florence, had the joy of witnessing animation restored.

Even while the fair stranger lay senseless on Lord Howth's shoulder, he remarked the uncommon loveliness of her form and features, the alabaster whiteness of the throat falling back from his support, the long and shining tresses of raven hair which streamed, sea-dropping, over a cheek that wanted only life to kindle into a rare beauty. Even these passive charms fixed his admiring gaze.

But when reviving, the stranger opened her dark dewy eyes, and fastened them upon him, the look penetrated him with a feeling hitherto unfelt; and from that moment he certainly gazed less with the eyes than with the heart.

As Mrs. Florence addressed the rescued lady, the latter sadly shook her head, laid her hand on her bosom in token of gratitude, pronouncing in silver tones, accompanied by gushing tears, a few words in some unknown language.

By these looks and actions the aunt and nephew comprehended that all belonging to their new guest had perished in the foundered vessel; and by their actions in return, they attempted to make her understand their desire of supplying the irreparable loss.

The stranger seemed endowed with a miraculous power of comprehending signs and expressions of countenance; for at Lord Howth's audible admiration of her beauty, though the tongue it was uttered in could not be known to her, she blushed "celestial rosy red;" and whether her humid eyes spoke by sweet fixture, or through the shade of darkening lashes, their speaking changes only varied gratitude and growing regard.

Still as Lord Howth met them, from the depths of those beauteous eyes came such looks of melting sweetness, and passionate endeavour to be understood, that he was gone ages in love, ere convinced that what he saw was not a blissful dream. It was evident that the fair stranger had been conscious whilst in Lord Howth's saving arms; for whenever she looked at him, so many tender emotions seemed crowded into the still-withdrawn, still-returning glance, that nothing short of actually knowing who had pre-

served her, could account for her sensibility taking that particular direction.

Every thing needful, which hospitality and kindness might bestow, was soon offered by Mrs. Florence; the lady was conducted to the best apartment, provided with night clothes; and, having taken such refreshment as Mrs. Florence recommended, was left to seek repose.

The next morning rose bright and calm, "unfolding fair the last autumnal day." The ocean spread smooth and smiling; smooth and smiling, alas! above the wreck of the night before.

Alma (as the foreign lady called herself) averted her eyes from its glistening waves, as she passed a side window in the breakfast-hall, which looked sea-ward. Yet she hastened on, with blushing eagerness, to meet Lord Howth's offered hand; seized and pressed it to her lips.

Strange and transporting was the emotion which thrilled through him at this unexpected action.—As his countenance flamed up, Alma dropt his hand, and averted her eyes in confusion; but the next moment she turned those eyes again upon him, full of woman's tender gratitude.

My hero knew not how to account for the extraordinary transport of his present feelings; founded as it was upon the conviction of those feelings being shared and approved by Alma. So strong was this conviction, and so intimate his persuasion, (preposterous as he knew it to be,) that Alma was a loving and beloved thing restored to him, that he found himself incapable of mastering it.

From this period, Lord Howth's health and spirits returned as if by magic. Former distempered regrets were lost in the delight of daily ministering to the wants and wishes of a lovely human being, who seemed thrown upon his protection by the great Ruler of the winds and waves.

Alma's incapacity of making herself understood by language, the very difficulty he had in expressing to her all he felt and thought, deepened his interest, and heightened the rapture of his solicitous attentions.

His liberality provided her with every sort of rich or elegant material for female dress, which her fair hands made up into garments totally unlike those worn by the ladies of any country Lord Howth had seen or read of, but of most becoming singularity. The words she spoke when strongly agitated, belonged also to a language

he had never heard : it soon became his valued office to teach her words of his own.

But language seemed unnecessary to impart his wishes to her. She appeared to have an intuitive knowledge of all his likings, habits, and peculiarities. Had she lived years in domestic fellowship with him, she could not have been better qualified for ministering to his home-comforts, and keeping every thing distasteful away. In short Alma seemed to live solely for Lord Howth.

Alma, however, demonstrated, that on great occasions she felt the paramount claims of social duties over the delights of indulged though pure passion ;—she never neglected the kind and aged aunt for the nephew ; and as she acquired the language of the country that sheltered her, she emulated the man she loved, by endeavouring to become useful in it.

She would go alone through inclement snows to visit the cabin and the schools ; work for the helpless ; watch by the bed-side of the sick ; and lend her smiling support to the poor cripple, that else would vainly have sought a friendly arm to lead him forth into the sunshine.

Such active virtues, joined to Alma's evident worship of a superintending Providence, quelled certain monstrous apprehensions at first entertained by Lord Howth's dependants and servants, that the lady was a witch, and their lord's passion for her the effects of witchcraft. Mrs. Florence was the earliest to spurn this notion, and heartily to give her consent, when her nephew imparted to her his purpose of marrying Alma.

By some occult mode, known only to lovers, my hero certainly very soon made Alma understand his purpose ; and comprehended himself that her heart was " nothing loth ;" but, aware that she could not become legally his, until she were able to pronounce those vows which bind love and duty together, he pursued the task of instructing her with all the ardour of anticipated rapture. Every former pursuit, regret, and enjoyment, were forgotten in her ; health came with happiness ; and social feelings with pride in the object of his affection. Roskerry again opened its doors to friends and travellers ; resuming its ancient reputation for hospitality and the cheerful graces.

The presence of Mrs. Florence O'Grady, and the manners of the beautiful unknown, happily prevented both ri-

diale and scandal. Wonder and curiosity, however, mingled with the admiration she inspired; and some who looked upon the transparent alabaster of her complexion, privately whispered, that the light which shone through it was more than mortal light. Sure they were that Lord Howth was worshipping, and they gazing, on some blessed thing, permitted only for a time, and for some mysterious reason, to walk this nether world.

Such conceits luckily reached not to Lord Howth. His fair pupil quietly accomplished the necessary power of bearing her part in the marriage ritual; and one fine morning, amid the prayers and benedictions of their tenantry, they were married.

The legend assures us, that never was union more felicitous. Both Alma and her lord seemed entirely to forget in each other the saddening parts of their past lives, while yet virtuously mindful of the various claims upon their time and attention, from objects unconnected with their domestic happiness. Language ceased to be of any consequence between two persons, where

“Thought leaped to thought, and wish prevented wish.”

Alma, however, began to talk Irish and English with fluent elegance; and was able, therefore, to check by words a foolish fancy of my hero's, which she had hitherto denied by earnest action. This fancy was one for taking off a curiously wrought bracelet, which constantly encircled her arm, and on which she evidently placed a high value.

When she could tell her husband so, she assured him that its removal would cost her her life; for that she prized it as dearly as existence.

Lord Howth naturally concluded that it had been the gift of some near and beloved relative, now no more, perhaps given in the dreadful hour of their shipwreck; and for some time he desisted from attempting to remove it. But, unluckily, a sort of jealous apprehension seized him, as she one day smilingly declined allowing him to displace it by one presented by himself. Piqued and alarmed, he inquired angrily, whether it were not the gift, then, of some favoured lover. Alma, who was truth itself, owned it was placed on her arm by one who loved her dearly; and that, if Lord Howth were worthy of her unlimited confidence in his truth, and honour, and affection, he would rest satisfied with her

solemn assurance, that she loved him, her husband, with an undivided heart, and had done so, from the first moment in which she beheld him. She conjured him never to wound her more, by repeating this inquiry; but suffer the bracelet to remain unmolested where it cherished; giving her, by such conduct, a proof of that confidence, without which she could not live. For the first time since their marriage, Lord Howth's infirmity of temper broke out: transported beyond himself, he gave utterance to all the intemperance of jealousy and passion; and finished by asking her madly, what would be the consequence of his removing this hated ornament without her consent.

Alma had been looking on him all the while, with the look of his sorrowing guardian angel. Tears gushed from her eyes, as tenderly folding and pressing him in her arms, she exclaimed: "The death of your Alma!—I repeat, that I cannot live, if you yield to the faulty part of your nature. Be assured too, that it will be your fatal distrust and violence, not the loss of an ornament, however valued, which will be my death. O Gerald, if you love your till-now-too-happy Alma, rely on her truth implicitly!"

"If I love thee! Alma,"—and with this passionate return to tenderness and confidence, the fond husband snatched her in his turn to his breast; and for that time the subject of disagreement was forgotten.

Some few weeks after this scene, Lord Howth, who was going to bathe, and had therefore risen early, returned from his dressing-room, ere he descended to the hall, to steal a kiss from his sleeping wife.

The weather was unusually hot, and Alma had unconsciously thrown herself partly out from the bed-clothes, and was now lying with no other covering over her beautiful face and shoulders, than the loosened tresses of her abundant hair. Through its black and shining tresses the roseate tints of her cheek, and the ivory whiteness of her finely rounded throat, appeared almost dazzling.

As the doting husband stood and watched her slumbers, at each soft breathing the roses of her cheek seemed unfolding visibly, deepening in colour with every breath. At once a lover and a poet, Lord Howth, murmured to himself,

———"The fresh air,  
Stirring the living roses of her cheeks,  
Bears their rich fragrance with it."



He might have finished his rhapsody, had not Alma changed her position, and flung one arm out of bed. It was that on which she wore the bracelet! Like Parian marble, and rounded with the sculptor's art, that beauteous arm fixed the gaze of Lord Howth: but it was neither the matchless form, nor the blue veins crossing and intersecting each other under its transparent surface, which arrested, and fixed him;—it was that fatal bracelet.

Alma drew a troubled sigh: he looked intently at her; she had sighed in her sleep. He looked again at her arm, and made a few steps forward; the light fell direct upon the face of his wife, which, by the alteration of her position, was now completely exposed to observation; he saw tears standing on her cheeks, like dew-drops on roses newly gathered.

“She is dreaming of her former lover!” he muttered to himself, “perish all memorial of him!” and, as he spoke, with momentary madness he tore away the fatal ornament.

Alma roused with a piercing shriek: once before only, Lord Howth had so thrilled with a cry. She opened her eyes, and turned them upon him;—that look!—it went to his soul: it was the last from her dying eyes. She strove to raise herself with outstretching arms, to meet his distracted embrace; but even in the act, her eyes closed, and she fell back upon the pillow, no longer his living Alma. Wild, yet stupified, Lord Howth stood for a few moments incapable of motion. Alma might have fainted only, from strong emotion! But no! there is a fearful something in the presence of death, which makes itself be felt:—who may mistake it? While the grief-shrunk husband stood rooted by the bed, he saw something stir near Alma: what was his amazement and his horror, when he beheld a rat start forth; cast at him such a look as Alma herself had given him; and disappear from his sight! With maddened impulse, Lord Howth looked at the bracelet in his convulsed grasp; it was gorgeously worked without; but within, he beheld the identical gold thread which he had fastened round the foot of his little favourite.

Overcome by the thousand wild and contradictory and amazing imaginations which rushed on him; distracted between the notion of a good, and a bad spirit; and conscious that he had assuredly been living in the bosom of one or of the other, his senses for awhile forsook him; and when

his attendants found him, he was cold and insensible as the beauteous corpse upon which he lay.

Lord Howth lived only a very short time after this extraordinary event. He was a Catholic ; and retiring into a monastery, there dedicated his few remaining months of life to penitence and prayer. It is said, that he died with a calmed mind, for he became convinced that it was a blessed spirit with which he had dwelt in such pure and benefit-bestowing happiness ; and that he had forfeited the blest communion, by yielding to the frailty of his lower nature, after it had been so nearly vanquished by salutary suffering. Lord Howth may be said, therefore, to have died of solemn, rather than of sad feelings ; and those who relate his story, tell it with awe, consequently, unmixed with horror.

The tale is still religiously believed in the country where it is reported to have happened ; and many a fancifully jealous lover, has learned from it, to take warning by Lord Howth's fate, ere he indulges in doubts, where reason and affection should teach him to rely.

## JEANNIE HALLIDAY,

• A TALE OF OUR OWN TIMES.

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We twa ha' rin about the braes,  
An' pued the gowans fine.

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SCOTCH BALLAD.

ON one of the sweetest spots in Angus, stands a small farm-house or cottage, where the heroine of my present tale passed the first years of her innocent life. It stands on the romantic and birch-fringed banks of "the sweet-winding Tay," among scenes of smiling and pastoral beauty; scenes well adapted to form the taste, and to give a tenderer tone to every tender feeling.

Jeannie Halliday was an orphan, living, like a child of their own, with a worthy couple, relations of her father. Her companion was their only son, a boy five or six years older than herself, but of such gentle and home-keeping habits, that their childish sports, and recreations of riper years, were generally enjoyed together. Affection between the young people consequently grew with their growth; and it was not until Jeannie attained her sixteenth birthday, that Alan Forsyth discovered to his sorrow, the different nature of their affection. Jeannie's was one of those delicate temperaments which are some time of deciding for health or feebleness. While she was a child, she was small and thin, and timid; and though her skin was transparently fair, only fluctuating tints of red were now and then seen playing through its snows. All at once she expanded into the beauty and freshness of the summer rose; her cheeks suffused with carnation; her lips glowed; and her shape, retaining its lightness and grace, became perfect in feminine proportion. Among the barefooted lasses of Angus, Jeannie Halliday's pretty feet were often the theme of rustic compliment; her hands too, were soft and finely-moulded; so that in the style of her beauty, as much as in her character, Jeannie rose above her companions.

The girl's eyes, like her hair, were of an uncertain colour; now, they floated only in the light of youthful joyance; yet were there moments and moods when their expression changed, and such softness dimmed them, as might well add the throbs of hope and tenderness to the first pleased emotion of her admirers.

The gudeman Forsyth and his staid wife were secretly proud of their "bonnie Jeannie." Often were they heard boasting her "sma' gimp waist, and hands like twa sna' drifts;" and scarcely would they let her milk even their favourite cow, or ever partake their habitually coarse food. Jeannie was bred up, therefore, with a sort of self-respect, which powerfully and nobly influenced her future conduct.

After she was grown up to womanhood, she was never seen permitting the young farmers in any of those familiarities, encouraged by girls of freer manners or wilder spirits than hers. Yet Jeannie was the gayest and most light-hearted lass at fair or penny-wedding. The very glance of her gladsome eye gave an impulse to the gayest spirits; the moment she appeared, young and old expected to be entertained, or put into good humour; for when she had nothing comic to say, she had always something kind: and where is the heart, young or old, which does not expand to kindness? Jeannie had been well taught, for she could both read and write; but as it was only on sabbaths that she took time for practising these accomplishments, and as she was always heard singing to herself while employed about household work, the elders of her acquaintance, wondered "How Jeannie Halliday could tak time to be sa staid and wiselike in her ways."

Jeannie Halliday's thought in conduct was certainly extraordinary in one so young; but reflection in her was the fruit of feeling. Adam Forsyth's wife (her almost second mother) died before Jeannie was twelve years old; and from that period, gratitude to her memory, and kind concern for the poor old man, left without any of womankind except herself to minister to his comforts, made her think and act in a manner far beyond her years.

Her playmate Alan felt Jeannie's moral value even more than her beauty, as he, too, ripened in age and reflectiveness. Whenever he returned from the field or the market (whither he was obliged to go, as his father increased in years and infirmities,) he was always sure to find their

“bonnie Jean” sitting quietly at her needlework under the shade of their hawthorn-trees, singing to the sparkling *burnie*, (as the Scotch call every small stream,) ready to run into the house, and get him the meal which her hand had previously prepared.

In the evening, Jeannie’s voice gave sweetness of tone and pathetic effect to their native ballads ; or deepened the interest of a ghost story ; or added zest to a tale of mirth ; or impressed scriptural truths more earnestly upon the hearts of her reverential hearers. The neatness and prettiness of their long irregular habitation, was also Jeannie’s work : Alan knew this, and frequently contrasted the comforts of his father’s dwelling with the discomforts of a neighbour’s, inwardly delighted to ascribe all superiority to Jeannie.

While she reduced the house to order, ranged their few pieces of old china and homelier delft, in decent order along shelves which her small hands polished into looking-glasses, Alan constructed many a rustic fence to secure her little improvements in and about the house ; trained jessamine and honeysuckle round every window and door-way ; wove the wilding rose into bowers ; and planted the willow and birch to overhang her favourite bank by the burn-side.

He kept the kail-yard free from nuisance, while she kept the garden plentiful in useful herbs ; and though Jeannie’s delicate hands could not wash the household linen, they spread it on the sweet-smelling gowans, sprinkled it through the day, and thus watched its bleaching with a matron’s care.

Young Alan’s softness of heart was coupled with much of that plain sound sense which belongs to that class of characters which the Scotch call a *discreet lad* ; and as he noticed these home-gracing, home-guiding qualities in Jeannie, he felt with transport, that, go the world over, he could never find one better fitted for a wife ; and that, consequently, he might, without levity or imprudence, safely yield to his fond yearning of making her his own eventually. Jeannie, giddy, idle, wasteful, and without a shilling, would have been a sad and shameful match for the only son of wealthy and prudent Adam Forsyth ; but Jeannie, considerate, active, and thrifty, though without money, was in herself a fortune.

Jeannie had but one extravagant propensity he owned,

and for that Alan loved her the dearer; she knew no bounds to bounty. Every one might count the number of begging bodies that had passed during the day by the farmhouse, by the state of its meal-tub and milk-stoups; Jeannie always making up the deficient size of her handsfull of the former by their frequent repetition.

Sometimes Alan observed that a favourite knot of ribbons disappeared from Jeannie's head or bosom, or a pretty mutch vanished; nay, occasionally Alan missed the very brooch or silk hood he had brought her from Dundee fair. Jeannie had given them away to poorer or more dress-coveting girls. Such a motive never failed to reconcile Alan to the seeming slight of his gifts.

Jeannie's blooming face, looking through clustered locks, that, changing their colour with the sunshine, varied through every shade of golden brown,—Jeannie's blooming face thus seen, was always seen with its sweetest smile on after she had been thus stripping her scanty wardrobe. No wonder, then, that Alan Forsyth loved her very profuseness.

Serenely secure of being dearer to Jeannie than any of the other young men who knew and courted her, Alan was only waiting till he should attain the age of one and twenty, ere he might venture to think himself entitled to ask the consent of his father to such a marriage.

Pious and rational, Alan believed himself bound to earn future happiness by present labour and self-denial; he therefore became more active and diligent than ever, cheerfully renouncing his enjoyment of Jeannie's sweet society, for hours of lonely cattle-tending, or busy town-going.

Between the day that was to make Jeannie sixteen, and his twenty-first birthday, there would be only two months; so near the period he had fixed on for asking her of his parent, Alan thought he might with propriety declare his wishes to the dear object of them, and secure, as he fondly trusted, their kind approval.

Jeannie's birth-day happened on Old May-day; and the May morning which brought the day Alan desired, appeared to him, nay, was indeed, the gayest and the brightest his eyes had ever opened upon.

On that morning he was summoned from his bed by the voices of a dozen or more lively young people under his window, who were come with garlands in their hands, to

usher in Jeannie's birth-day, and to accompany her in the rural sport of dew-gathering.

This custom, peculiar to Scotland, is worthy of a people whose simplest hinds have in them a tincture of romance and refinement: it is a custom in harmony with their beautiful melodies and exquisite ballads, which those melodies echo back upon the heart; it invites to the sight of the newly-risen sun, and the glistening earth; to the healthful action of the morning air; to the delicious smell of herbs, fruits, and flowers; to the early warble of birds, and lowing of cattle; to all, in short, that gladdens the heart of man, and is calculated to lift it with gratitude and joy towards its Maker.

On the present occasion, the season was particularly forward in Angus-shire; all the orchards and hedges were in full blow; the mavis and the throstle challenged each other from bowers of the freshest green, or the most fragrant hawthorn; and the feet of the dew-gatherers, as they ran joyously over the mossy banks of Tay, pressed out the sweetness of the last violets.

The whole country sparkled under dew and sunshine, beguiling artless girls to tan their complexion by their very search of a cosmetic.

The laugh, the hearty carol, the social call, the jest, the sportive race, all these bursts from jocund spirits, accompanied this little band of friends and neighbours in their eager search-after spots where the dew lay the heaviest.

Innocent or careless hearts made every trifle contribute to enjoyment; and the competition of which girl should carry home the most dew, and which young man should find the rarest wild-flower to decorate the breast and hair of Jeannie Halliday, soon became a positive pleasure.

It was Alan Forsyth's lot to discover, at the moist root of a wild apple-tree, a cluster of the fragrant meadow-sweet: whole boughs of the tree, covered with their white and vermilion blossoms, were quickly sacrificed to the rustic gallantry of the youths, who claimed the honour of forming her future garland. Alan's meadow-sweet was distinguished by an immediate place in her bosom.

After this little halt, the merry party were returning homeward in scattered and long-divided groupes along the margin of the river, when the demon of rude sport, or of secret envy, suddenly seized one of Jeannie's companions;

and snatching at the flowers, the girl threw them with some fearful words, into the passing stream.

Jeannie's natural exclamation of affectionate regret, "O Tibbie woman, how could you—and Alan's flowers too!"—made poor Alan's heart thrill: with love's quick fancy he interpreted the simple meaning, while, in a transport of joy and fond surprise, he dashed into the river to regain the flowers. Alan forgot that he was unused to danger, and a timid swimmer; but Jeannie recollected both circumstances, and running wildly along the bank, called on some one, for God's sake, for his auld feyther's sake, to help him out.

At that moment the current had drifted the nosegay close to a ship's boat, which the dew-gatherers had been previously noticing with admiration of its rapid advance. Alan was eagerly following in the direction of the flowers, when one of the young men in the pinnace called out to him to swim away from the suction of their keel. Seeing that he either understood not, or disregarded the warning, the fearless young sailor leaped into the water, and at the imminent hazard of his own life, saved that of Alan. The latter was got with the greatest difficulty into the boat; but the other, bidding his comrades follow, swam direct to the land. The danger and the rescue were the work of an instant; so that Jeannie's agony of fear endured but a moment or two. She neither fainted nor flung herself into the arms of Alan, when reaching the shore he hastened to her from the boat, but clasping her hands together, and bursting into joyful tears, she exclaimed, "Now God be praised! oh what wad ha' become o' your feyther, Alan, had ye been drowned! what wad ha' become o' me, ha'ing your dethe o' my conscience!"

Alan was disenchanted of his sanguine hopes at this artless address. Jeannie's grief for his loss would be severe then only because she caused his death; and as he thought thus, the returning colour fled his cheek: he shrunk back towards his preserver, and seeking the support of his arm, hung there a heavy weight.

Every one now circled the two young men, whose appearance, as they stood answering questions, and exchanging thanks for blessings, formed a striking contrast.

Alan was small and slight of make, with a fair mild face of interesting, though now of too piteous expression; the water had laid his soft light hair quite flat to his head; which, together with the nervous tremor of his body, from



feelings known only to himself, gave him an air of feebleness and apprehensiveness foreign to his real character. The young tar, on the contrary, stood smilingly erect, the clusters of his rich brown hair glittering with, not quelled by the water; his open brow all displayed; one part of it sunburned nearly to the dark hue of his hair, the other polished and white as marble. In fact there was a light over the whole of this young man's countenance, which, if it were not absolutely beauty, produced beauty's best effect; for at the first glance it bespoke favour for the frank, warm-hearted, stainless character it announced.

A figure finely grown, in the plenitude of manly strength and youthful elasticity, was recommended by the carelessness of its clothing: no jacket, common sailor's trowsers, a clean checked shirt, scarcely closed at the throat by a loosely-knotted silk handkerchief—such was his attire. His straw hat, rudely garlanded with May, was seen floating down the river. He was the first to wish it a good voyage.

Both the voice and the smile of this young man were singularly agreeable: he smiled often; but the consciousness of having very fine teeth certainly had nothing to do with his smiles. He received the congratulations and thanks of the different persons composing the groupe round him with a mixture of pleasantry and feeling that pleased them all; and when Alan invited him to come on with them to his father's house, and partake in the festivity of their Jeannie's birth day, he accepted the invitation with honest willingness. As the party sauntered homeward, he informed them that the merchant ship he belonged to, lay at anchor at the mouth of the Tay: that it had just arrived from Barcelona, and would sail again in three or four months more on a short voyage to some other Spanish port; that he was the only son of a widow, who was lately come down from the Highlands to live with a single brother, residing a few miles from the place the Forsyths dwelt in; and that as he should have leave to visit his mother while the ship was unloading and getting ready for sea again, he should be enabled to gratify himself and comply with the hearty invitations of his new acquaintance, by coming often to see them.

To those who live in the world, nothing is so surprising as the frankness and facility with which those who live out of it, talk of their own feelings and concerns to strangers: it is a habit which springs out of confidence in the kind sym-

pathy of those around us, and is acquired by living solely with friends or kindred ; it is therefore the witness of some worth in the person who so develops himself—many may say, it is no witness of wisdom.

Be that as it may, Malcolm Cameron's free and fluent details of his own connexions and adventures, gave nothing but pleasure to the artless folk with whom accident had joined him. There was not the slightest tincture of vanity or of self-admiration in his personal anecdotes ; nay, his anecdotes were generally narrations, descriptive of some comrade's courage and conduct, in which his own share was merely incidental ; but as there is no describing another without developing one's self, the generous glow with which he detailed another man's excellencies, the kindly interest he took in every creature ; the noble envy he now and then expressed of magnanimity displayed, and gallant enterprise successful, proved him to be at least of kindred spirit with those he admired, and warranted his hearers in believing, that, under similar circumstances, he too would have entitled himself to become the hero of a tale.

When Cameron spoke of his mother, his fine open eye shrouded itself in an expression of tenderness, which, if it dimmed the brightness of that eye, deepened its interest. His mother, he owned, " had not been happy in marriage ; his poor father had not been so well guided as he might have been ; but he was now, puir man, in the kirk-yard, and his failings need na' be spoken o' ". His mother was comfortable now, for she was taken home by her brother, the worthy minister that had paid for his schooling and put him to sea, with a God-fearing captain ; so her worldly comforts were off his mind. She was the kindest, dearest mother, if she had but health ;" and as Cameron pronounced these words Jeannie's brimming eye encountered the moistened glance of his. Something like a blush coloured his brown cheek at this. Could he have known the effect of that tear-hung eye, and that ingenuous blush of his, would he have inwardly denounced them ?

Jeannie herself was unconscious of their effect upon her heart, though they had actually sowed the first seeds of that fond and virtuous passion with which she was afterwards to look on, and listen to Malcolm Cameron. Now she went on, leaning upon his arm, and talking across him to Alan

Forsyth, who hung upon the other, and thought only what a delightful acquaintance had sprung up out of a fright. \*

The wet clothes of the young men were dried by the increasing heat of the sun, long before their circuitous road home was accomplished : a plentiful breakfast waited them at the farm, to which Malcolm Cameron sat down, professing an appetite too ravenous for any attention to others ; yet, even in such very trifles, Cameron's total disregard of self was evident to the most careless observer. Was any thing wanted from another end of the table, or from the shelves round the parlour-kitchen in which they sat, he started up to get it ; he was quick as lightning in noting whose quaiigh wanted filling, and what sort of provision was the least plentiful. Jeannie could not avoid observing that he eluded taking any of their few dainties ; and her own character helped her to understand his.

But with all this benevolent watchfulness, there was something so careless and joyous in the sailor's manner, that he seemed to hit upon his kindnesses absolutely by chance, never giving the person obliged, time to consider it ; but going on with his jest or his anecdote, as if there were nothing else done. .

No one was more taken by the young man's free hilarity than old Forsyth ; and deeply impressed with obligations for his son's life, he pressed him so warmly to come and spend a little time at the Brae Farm, that Cameron gladly pledged himself to be its frequent inmate during his long visit to his mother. In less than a week he expected to have his furlough from the vessel.

Happy was the humble party now gathered round the table of Adam Forsyth. Malcolm Cameron's spirits were absolute sun-beams, in which Jeannie Halliday's glittering smiles sported like butterflies. Among the other young people, there were one or two rustic wits, and not one hyper-critic to sift their sallies too closely ; they feasted, and sang, and danced, through the whole twelve hours ; separating at night with hearts perfectly satisfied with the pleasures of to-day, contentedly ready to resume the business and steadiness of the morrow.

Through these long hours of jocund idling, none had been so still and silent as Alan Forsyth : his spirits were first subdued by the danger and deliverance of the morning, and the damp thrown on them by Jeannie's exclama-

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tion about his father's sorrow only : since then, shade after shade had gathered over and oppressed his heart, as he sat listening to the animated talk of his new friend. It was not envy, nay, it was not jealousy which caused Alan's seriousness ; but a gradually dawning conviction that he himself was not worthy of the bliss he coveted : he now saw that these were for better men in the world than poor Alan Forsyth. Hitherto he had compared this Alan only with young rustics like himself ; "home-keeping youths," with "homely wits" and homely manners like his own, perhaps inferior. He had fondly fancied, that loving and admiring Jeannie Halliday, since his boyish heart was capable of a preference, preferring her comforts on all occasions to his own, he had fondly fancied that such love deserved, and must win return. He had fancied, that by voluntarily refusing a match with the only child of a very rich neighbour, he should display a disinterestedness and contempt of mere worldly increase, which must secure to him her high esteem ; and he had believed that his society was sufficient for her happiness as her's was for his ; because he never till now had seen her listen more, or so delightedly to another.

But this day's incidents had proved the fallacy of these notions. Compared with Malcolm Cameron, either in person or character, Alan felt that he shrunk into nothing.

Full of narrative, of original remark, of picturesque descriptions, and ardent feeling, Cameron by turns awakened the keenest interest in what he was telling, or caused the liveliest pleasure. Malcolm Cameron evidently made light of sacrificing minor tastes, wants, and inclinations for the gratification of mere strangers ; nay, for a stranger he had voluntarily and spontaneously risked life itself, and with all this, Malcolm Cameron evidently had not the remotest idea that he had done any thing out of the common way. Malcolm Cameron too was a model of manly beauty, at least of manly gracefulness. Alan sighed as he thought thus : then reflected, that if such characters and bearing were shaped by contact with the world, there must be many such in its wide paths ; and that he ought not, therefore, to appropriate Jeannie's precious hand until she had seen men more worthy of her ; if after that she could fancy him for *auld lang syne's* sake ; but oh, Jeannie could never fancy him now ! Poor Alan turned on his lone bed with a sorrow-

ful groan, and such a feeling of nothingness, as made it impossible for him to close his eyes that night.

Not many days after this Malcolm Cameron appeared again; he was just settled at the manse for the whole period of the ship's harbouring in the Tay; and warning his new friends of a sailor's restless activity, he threatened them with a daily visit while near enough to pay them one.

Cameron fulfilled his threat, to the mixed pain and pleasure of Alan; to the growing delight of Jeannie, and the cordial satisfaction of old Forsyth. He soon associated himself in the old man's field-work and business rides—strode off on all Jeannie's little errands to market or distant friends—tried farming improvements privately with Alan—helped to reconcile the father to these improvements—and regularly walked over every Sunday from the manse, to accompany the Brae Farm family back to the kirk of which his uncle was the minister.

On all these occasions, such an atmosphere of kindly affections and youthful hilarity ever came with him, that as Jeannie said, the sound of his cheerful voice,—ngy, soon the very sound of his step when running up their bonnie brae, was to her, sweet and gladsome as sweetbriar in a shower.

Neither Jeannie nor her lover had fallen in love at first sight; at least they had neither of them thought of the passion; but lovers they soon became; unconscious, unreflecting, innocent, happy lovers! Cameron's little histories were soon told solely to Jeannie; at least his eye dedicated them to her without positive purpose; and Jeannie's eyes were ever waiting for the light of his, with a sweet fixtore, which as yet no gay or grave remark had made her aware of.

No heart indeed, except poor Alan's, was on the watch. Every day some new and trifling incident called forth some new and ennobling quality in the young sailor: if he absented himself for a day or two, they found he had been tenderly watching the sick-bed of his delicate mother, or he was gone off on some kindly errand of friend, or neighbour. Jeannie heard of him all round their neighbourhood, as the assistant of every poor cotter, cumbered with a large family, and ill-paying work. Cameron complained of not knowing what to do with his time, and so persuaded the persons he served to think for the moment that they were obliging him, when accepting his hand at delving, ditching, stacking, &c. The little money Cameron had brought from

sea, was poured into his mother's lap, that she might have something of her own, even under her brother's roof; and a penny to give away to poorer bodies than herself. This the fond mother, in her pride of heart, could not help repeating to the portionless Jeannie, who remembering her first impression of Malcolm's thoughtlessness by his self-injuring assertions whenever pedlars' packs tempted him to make her a present, felt how much she had wronged, by believing him.

Traits of character like these here recorded of Malcolm Cameron, are the true weapons of love. With records like these he cuts into virtuous hearts, leaving the weapon in the wound.

Through each day Jeannie saw Malcolm Cameron only by snatches, as he would spare himself a moment from friendly employment; but of evenings he was either at the Brae Farm, or the Forsyths went to the manse; and in those happy evenings, (often over the pages of the sacred volume,) the love of this deserving pair grew and ripened.

Malcolm Cameron was ingenious as well as active; he could execute with the rudest knife, the nicest piece of carving, out of wood or bone; his miniature baskets and boats made of cherry stones, were the boast of all the little good children within reach of his gracious temper. Even the more elaborate work of a frigate with all her rigging complete, was begun for a present to Jeannie, and carried on under her admiring eye. Often during their pleasant evenings, would the light-hearted sailor make good his mother's assertion, that he must always be doing something, by insisting upon mending his own jacket, when torn by rough exercise.

Whoever belongs to a sailor, need not be told with what becoming awkwardness Cameron handled the huge needle which he persisted in thinking adapted to his work; striking it through the cloth without the aid of a thimble. They will remember, too, their own wonder at the success of such clumsy sewing; and easily comprehend how much of fondness and pride there was in Jeannie's pleasure of looking on. In fact, it was the lamb associating with the lion; conscious of being imitated from love, by the noble creature it venerated.

I will not say that Jeannie would have looked so admiringly upon a less manly and handsome form than Came-

ron's so employed : the contrast between the employment and the employed, would not then have been so poignant. Surely love is but a better sort of friendship, if the person has not some share in its emotion !

Malcolm Cameron's face and figure were both so handsome, that it seemed as if nature had been extravagant in giving such limbs and features to one whose expression of countenance and grace of action rendered lines and colouring quite secondary. Upon such a face and figure it is not probable that the eyes of a girl of sixteen could long look undisturbed.

Jeannie, however, would perhaps never have looked on either a second time, at least not have rested on them, had not goodness and delightfulness of humour shone out in the young man's manner ; and had she not deeply felt her obligation to him for saving the life which her thoughtless care of a few flowers had put in danger.

Malcolm Cameron's love for her was certainly first kindled by her beauty. Sailors' hearts are prone to fondness ; for how brief are the periods in which they may indulge man's natural inclination to appropriate woman's heart to himself, and in return to lavish all the kindly affections and protecting tenderness of his own ! Their hearts may be said to be on *the look out* for such happiness, whenever they come on shore. No wonder, then, that they are generally quickly, often rashly bestowed.

Malcolm Cameron knew only one woman intimately—that woman was his mother. She was good, tender, self-vanquishing in temper, endearing to live with : he supposed her a fair sample of other women ; and he therefore met all the virtuous of the sex with an amiable credulity, which left him completely at the mercy of every bright eye and blooming cheek that chose to attack him.

Cameron had frequently been *smitten*, as he termed it, whilst in different ports ; and he talked of his old loves frankly, laughingly :—wondering why he should cease to care for them ; wondering, till longer knowledge of Jeannie, and deeper search into his own bosom, explained the cause to him.

That it was only to the bright eye and blushing cheek he had formerly bowed ; that no real charm of manner, mind, or heart had penetrated to his ; and no deep feeling in their hearts demanded and secured, as it would have done, his

constancy. This, perhaps, is the history of many men's many loves.

To stand and watch Jeannie spinning, admiring her pretty foot as it turned the wheel, and her soft round arm as she spun the thread—to watch for the hastily-snatched glance of her bashful eye, or the glimpse of more than her little foot, as she walked swiftly through the morning air—these things, for awhile, were the highest gratification, and strongest symptoms of Cameron's love. By degrees both took a higher range.

It was the sound of Jeannie's voice, Jeannie's step, that made him shiver over his whole body;—the sight of Jeannie's face, whether pale or blooming—the thought of Jeannie's heart—the feeling that Jeannie's self, whatever that self might be, if youth, health, beauty, sprightliness, were all gone, would ever be to him the dearest thing on earth:—it was this feeling, which at last possessing him wholly, settled into such affection, as from the moment it is self-acknowledged, points to an union for life.

Jeannie's grateful and daughter-like care of old Forsyth was amiable and meritorious, yet Cameron did not overrate it: such gratitude was the old man's due. But her kindness to other "paur auld bodies, living their lane," as she described two or three other cotters, crabbed with infirmities, and "their lane," because they were crabbed—her kindness to them was indeed a virtue, for which his inmost soul honoured her.

He admired her, too, for wearing faded plaids, and hose of her own knitting, because she made a conscience of never wasting Adam Forsyth's siller; and he loved her, for her tender attention to his invalid mother; which, while it breathed only tenderness for another's feeble health, might be fairly construed into a little weakness for himself. In short, Malcolm Cameron loved fondly, truly, worthily—a sailor's measureless love.

Alan Forsyth marked this mutual attachment at its commencement, and throughout its progress: in silence and sadness, marked it.

On the very first day of Malcolm Cameron's introduction to the Brae Farm, he had given up the flattering hope of being preferred by Jeannie; and with that hope the purpose of telling her his wishes.

Sincere love, even in the most untutored bosoms, is dis-



interested and self-denying : poor Alan's was worthy a better fate than that which threatened it here.

The earliest feeling which followed his conviction of Cameron's attachment, before he saw clearly into Jeannie's modest heart, was a strong desire to go forth into the busy world, as that young man had done, and win consideration, like him.

Malcolm Cameron's captain had spent a day at the Manse when Alan was there, and his warm commendation of the young seaman's capacity and conduct, together with a tale he told of his volunteering and joining a king's boat in boarding a Portuguese ship, which was supposed to have African slaves in her, against the treaty, and which were rescued, at the risk of all the lives in the boat :—this tale, roughly told, roused all that was manly in the soul of Alan. He felt, that in such a cause, he too would freely risk limb and life ; and that opportunity, therefore, alone was wanting, to put him upon some equality with his rival. He determined, then, to go to sea ; for Alan could see no road to honour and usefulness, except that which Malcolm Cameron had run over.

Many days Alan revolved this scheme ; not with hesitation of its adoption, but from anxiety to pitch upon the best and most promising mode of executing it.

Suddenly the idea of his father's advanced age, shot through his mind : he remembered that he was an only child ; and that if Jeannie Halliday married, the gray-haired old man would be left alone. Never was greater sacrifice made by human heart to duty and affection, than was now made in the sad loneliness of his,—by poor Alan Forsyth. He would stay by his honoured father : if he could not please Jeannie, unless he went through hardships and shipwrecks, and dared desperate things like Malcolm Cameron, he must be content to break his heart at home ; but if Jeannie could only see down into that heart ! Alan felt for a brief moment the honest consciousness of better deserving her by the struggle and conquest there, than by years of such gallant services as Malcolm Cameron's : and this consciousness helped to support him through his resolution.

How many virtues rise, blossom, and bring forth abundant fruit, in the shade of humble domestic life ; nay, often in the very privacy of the heart itself ! how many generous actions (of which events may prevent the performance,) are

meditated upon, and finally purposed, in a man's own thoughts! how many heroic sacrifices made, unseen by any eye, save that of the One All-seeing!

But such purposes are recorded as actions in the dread book of account; such sacrifices will be proclaimed before men and angels, in that day when all secrets are made known.

Alan Forsyth's religious education had early taught him to balsam many a grief with thoughts like these; and such only, could still the throbbing agony, with which, mastering his own desires, he daily witnessed the growth and sunshine of another's.

In their summer evening's walk, Jeannie's arm always hung upon that of Malcolm Cameron; perhaps, indeed, Alan had too dejectedly given his to some other female companion. The sweetest June rose, while there were June roses to gather, were plucked for Malcolm; the last lingering one carefully preserved for him. His were the strawberries gathered in the morning dew; the curds Jeannie's hand had pressed; his, all those nameless familiar attentions, which tell so much to others, and are so totally unperceived by the person who bestows them.

But they were death darts to Alan. He could not complain; would not condemn her for them. He was still the object of Jeannie's sisterly care and kindness; nothing was altered in her to him; it was simply that she now loved and artlessly showed her love.

Alan, meanwhile, admired and warmly regarded the noble youth she had selected; for Cameron had not only preserved his life, but showed such sterling worth, and had such winning amiableness of manner, that it was impossible for a generous mind to refuse him its tribute.

One night Alan and Malcolm were standing together on the green before the Manse, the former studying the starry heavens under the latter's instruction; when Jeannie stole quietly up to them, inquiring "what they were glowering at."

"At the stars, Jeannie!" answered Alan, "Cameron is telling me the names o' maist o' them." Jeannie asked at random the name of one most immediately in her view.

"That," said Malcolm, with animation, "is my favourite star; for it never changes. Many a night has it looked on me in my lonely watch! shall I teach ye how to know it,

Jeannie, when I am far awa' on the wide, wide seas, thinking o' ye, perhaps; will ye gi' it a glance and me, a thought then, Jeannie?"

The last words were uttered in a low, whispering tone, stifled from suddenly-softened feelings; not from distrust of the friend who now stepped back, with all his pulses throbbing.

The expression of Malcolm Cameron's eyes, as he looked tenderly into Jeannie's down-dropping ones, and the gentle pressure Alan saw him give her hand, as he drew her arm through his, spoke volumes. Jeannie was silent; but a fluttering sigh escaped her. O that sigh, to Alan! "Did ye ever hear," continued Malcolm, in a subdued voice, "the song a dawting wife was said to have made upon the husband she loved, after he had showed her this star in the heavens? what wad Malcolm Cameron gi', to be but half sae weel loo'd by ane dear lassie, that he is na' bauld aneugh to name just noo. Jeannie, may I say the song owre to ye?" Jeannie did not speak, but the beating of her heart against the arm she hung on, encouraged Malcolm to proceed. With some little breathlessness, yet much natural pathos in his voice, Cameron repeated the following lines,—

That anely star, that anely star,  
Nae ither noo, shall ithers teach me;  
When thou and I are sunder'd far,  
On that lane star my heart shall reach thee.

And when at tearfu' hour o' night,  
That beauteous star appears to bless me;  
I'll feel thy spirit in its light,  
And wi' sic blissfu' thought possess thee!

While these verses were repeating, the colour gradually heightened, and overspread the cheeks of Jeannie; she was awaking to her own feelings, and to those of Malcolm. The idea of marriage and him, was thrilling in her bosom: she could not speak: she did not wish to speak. Malcolm ceased; and he too was thrillingly silent.

Alan Forsyth's audible shiver made Jeannie start; she uttered some exclamation of his being "cauld, sic a fine night," and scarcely knowing why or how she did it, she broke from Cameron's gentle hold, and ran into the house.

Alan's shiver, and the deathly hue of his face, arrested the steps of Cameron: a suspicion which had never before crossed him, (so silent and diffident had been Alan's passion,

and so sister like Jeannie's manner,) now rushed upon him : he hastily took Alan's arm, and drawing him to a little distance, abruptly asked if he did not love Jeannie Halliday, and thought to marry her ?

Poor Alan could, with sincerity, say he had no thought whatever of marrying Jeannie : he felt a choking sensation ; but his resolution was taken ; and he replied with well-acted carelessness, that he shook from partial returns of an ague, which came on him now and then, after being overheated.

Cameron was not immediately satisfied, and he generously protested, that if there ever had been anything between Jeannie and the son of her adopted father, he would rather die than try to win her affections from him.

Again Alan disclaimed the existence of such a tie ; wishing him good luck in his own wooing ; adding, " But tak yere ain time, man ; and be sure I'll keep your secret ; sae, ye dinna be a'ways dinning me wi' it. I'm na' unco fond o' luve havers."

" Or ye would ha' foresta'd me wi' my bonny Jean, a gude twal'months by," exclaimed the overjoyed Cameron, " and by my troth, Alan, I wonder ye did na."

" Whisht, man ! here come the auld folk !" exclaimed Alan, glad to be so interrupted ; and turning away from his unsuspecting companion.

Alan's tone was cheerful, but his heart was in its *death thraw* ; and had Malcolm Cameron been left time to look again upon the smile in Alan's eye, he would have felt and translated its ghastliness.

Malcolm rushed into the house after Jeannie, to insist upon escorting her home, with what intention may be guessed ; while Alan waited for his father's slow approach, in a state of desperate calmness. The struggle was past :—the waters had closed over the wreck of all his hopes ; and he was left on a desert strand, alone, and for ever.

It seemed as if Alan sought to appease his misery, by a more anxious performance of that very duty, for which he had made his greatest sacrifice ; or he feared to give himself time to think himself into such agony as mocks concealment ; for he busied himself in putting on the old man's bonnet, and wrapping him closer in his plaid ; and as he supported him on his arm, he walked with a more cautious step.

It was indeed a fresh-blowing night, tintured with early frost ; but for youth and health, its freshness, was exhilarating. The moonlight and the night dew, lay on every sparkling burn and flowry brae ; nothing but the soft lapse of the water was heard through the sweet tranquillity ; for not a breath of air altered the shadow, flung by the birch-groves, over their path between the Manse and the farm.

Under that crystal moon, and those breathing shades, Malcolm Cameron whispered his love, his wishes, his hopes, to Jeannie ; and Jeannie plighted him her virgin troth in return.

It was settled, that he was to ask the promise of her hand from her adopted father now, and to claim that hand, when he should return from the voyage he was going upon.

His captain had allowed him to take out certain articles of barter as a venture ; his expectations of selling them to great advantage, were sanguine and well-founded ; so that on his coming back, he might take a small farm, and with his good uncle's help, and his own industry, be able to support such a wife as his notable Jeannie.

Jeannie could have married Malcolm, without house or home ; with the bare heath for her bed, and the wild berry for her fare : but she was too bashful to say so, and Malcolm too generous to tempt her to such a fate.

Jeannie wore a plain gold ring on her third finger, and Malcolm one upon his fourth ; they now exchanged these rings. When they did so, they were much in advance of Alan and his father, and partially concealed from observation, by the thick boughs of the birch-trees ; yet Malcolm only ventured to press Jeannie to his side, as his arm encircled her slender waist ; repeating at the same moment with suffocating emotion, the words "for ever and ever !"

Jeannie's very heart seemed swimming round with her head, as she involuntarily sunk against his shoulder. "That ring, Malcolm," she said, after a long and happy silence, "was auld Eppie Forsyth's, she gaed it me when she died ; wi' her blessin, and a sair charge never to gi it awa', but to sic a man as your sel', Malcolm ! ane, I had first gi'en my whale heart to. Wha' was it gaed ye yours, Malcolm ?"

"Ane that was na' sae happy ; a puir sodger lad that I made acquaintance wi' at Gibraltar, parted fra' the lass he loosed. He was na' rich, and the lassie's friends wad na' let

him marry her ; sae he listed, and went beyond seas, and there died o' a consumption."

"Waes me ! an' what becam' o' the puir lassie," asked Jeannie; with glistening eyes.

"I dinna ken,—nor he never kenn'd,"—replied Cameron, fetching a kindly sigh to the memory of his companion ; "I verily believe the puir fallow might ha' lived could he but ha' heard tell o' her : but he never did. Sae whether she war' true or false, or down-keepit by her friends, he could na' guess. Aft times did he show me a lang lock o' her bonnie silk hair, that he keepit far out o' sight in his brist, and a flower she ance gaed him aff her head, (the flower he had buried wi' him,) and that very ring that he said she had gaed him, just as ye ha' gi'en me your's Jeannie. He bad me tak' the ring aff his finger when he suld be quite cauld, wi' his prayer that it might bring me better luck in luvè than he had had. His prayers ha' been well answered for me, puir lad !"

Jeannie felt seized by a shuddering : to her youthful fancy there was evil omen in a faith thus cemented. The interchange of rings bequeathed on death-beds had something dismal and portentous in it ; and she drew Malcolm's present half off her finger, whilst giving utterance to the fear. Cameron eagerly checked this action, and gently forcing back the ring, chid her with all the tenderness of a fond yet manly heart for such distressing superstition. "Gif ye will ha' it ominous, tak' it as a token that ye s'all be as gude a wife to me as Eppie was to her gudeman ; and that I s'all be as true a husban' to ye as puir Robie was a joe to his Madie—true till my dethe, Jeannie."

With this interpretation of the omen Jeannie's artless heart was satisfied ; and returning to its first glow of joy, that heart continued to beat with new and increasing delight, at every additional expression of her Malcolm's love, and at every fresh picture of their future lives when united.

So impatient was her sailor for the consent of the only friend Jeannie had to consult, that scarcely could she persuade him, as they approached the Brae Farm, to defer asking it till the morrow.

It was late she observed, and what he had to say must be all said to her adopted father ; "she was amaisht the auld man's child, and Malcolm must think it wa'd gi'e him owre

much thought to let him gae to sleep after, sae he had better cum owre to breakfast, and tell it auld Adam then."

With this half-bashful, half-considerate suggestion, Cameron in his turn was obliged to be contented; therefore, abruptly shaking hands with both father and son, as they now came up with him and Jeannie, he darted away to disburthen his happy load at least to his mother. On the morrow Cameron's love-tale was told, and told prosperously. Old Forsyth, with all his fondness for Jeannie, was yet not sorry to dispose of her to a well-deserving man; leaving thus his own son in a manner freed from what might otherwise appear decent and right,—the necessity of marrying the orphan his parents had brought up.

To somewhat of that regard for money, which seems to grow upon us with years, Adam Forsyth added a sort of pride, in the probability of his Alan making a match of a higher character than one with a portionless girl; while at the present moment that pride was gratified, by his adopted daughter's future husband being the nephew of a respected minister.

Quite unsuspecting of his son's deep-seated love for Jeannie, he therefore gave a cordial assent to the young people's engagement; and went himself to report the pleasant news to Alan. Old Forsyth, luckily, was both purblind and hard of hearing. Alan's deathly look, and convulsed voice, were thus lost on him; and the shock over, the virtuous Alan, from the very strength of his despair, was able to master himself so completely, that when he met Jeannie and her lover, the cheerfulness of his congratulations argued even less than ordinary sensibility to their happiness. Yet had Alan really loved Jeannie merely with a brother's affection, her happiness would have touched him too tenderly for cheerfulness.

Jeannie and Cameron were too much occupied with each other to observe any third person narrowly. Soon, indeed, they had not a moment of present enjoyment to lose; for the ship was to sail in a fortnight; and Malcolm's mother craving for her share of his beloved society, naturally drew Jeannie along with him, to her fire-side, at the Manse. There, while the blissful pair enjoyed themselves with her and the worthy minister, Alan desperately buried himself in toil and calculations: affecting such an interest in business and its profits, that neighbours whispered; "he, too, must

have marriage in his head." None were surprised, therefore, when he started the project of going south, to sell some very fine cattle; a speculation from which he expected, he said, to reap a four-fold return.

He wished also, he added, to see something of England and its ways; and if he could reach as far as Norfolk, to go and visit a cousin there, settled as under-gardener to the great agriculturist of that county, through whose means he looked for an insight into some of their new modes of husbandry.

As Alan proposed taking a farming servant with him, consequently, would not appear himself in the very humble character of a Scottish drover, old Forsyth was induced to give his consent to this second unexpected event in his family; and, just before Malcolm Cameron sailed for the Havannah, Alan Forsyth began his sad and almost solitary journey southwards. Well did Alan know, that his heart, which had manfully struggled against its own sorrow, could never stand the sight of Jeannie Halliday's. He guessed what she was about to go through in parting with her beloved and betrothed; and he wisely, therefore, fled from the danger of aggravating her sufferings, by betraying to her the misery she had caused to him.

Agonizing, indeed, was the parting pang of Jeannie and her lover: and the more acute was the pang, from neither of them having allowed themselves to ponder on it, till the moment came.

Almost always together, they could not be otherwise than happy; and so happy, that to imagine a different state of feeling was, under such present influence, impossible, without a positive effort: but to suffer and to part was their destiny; and, amidst tears, prayers, blessings, and embraces, they separated.

Alas, the penalty we pay for our dearest joys in this world! Now came Jeannie's nights of waking and of weeping. Winds blew; rains fell; shipwrecks were heard of: nights seemed longer; days more wearisome, than Jeannie had ever remembered nights and days before: the beginning and end of autumn appeared to her more mournful than all the former autumns of her short life. O the weary winter! how was she to get over it?

Poor Jeannie! this was thy first sorrow. Yet hope and happiness were shining through those dark clouds, like



twin stars : how mayst thou live then, under skies, without a single star !

But the winter was gone through at last ; and, with the sunshine of March, the good ship Andrew entered the mouth of the Tay. Malcolm Cameron returned to the Brae Farm and the Manse, with health on his brow, happiness in his heart, and a bag of foreign gold coin (honestly filled) in his hand.

He brought with him a parrot for Jeannie, a silk-gown for his mother, Havannah snuff for his uncle and old Forsyth, and for Alan sundry species of grain "to experiment with."

He came with the sunshine, and like the sunshine ; for at his appearance every cloud vanished from the faces and feelings of all he rejoined. All save Alan ; whose wretchedness, however, was still resolutely concealed from every eye.

Arrangements were speedily made for the marriage of the re-united lovers ; a small farm was taken, only a few miles beyond the Manse ; which Malcolm's gains stocked and furnished. Old Forsyth, privately urged by his son, made Jeannie a present of some milch cows and poultry, together with all the household linen she had herself spun. Alan, with much difficulty, obtained leave, after this really bountiful gift, to show his affection for the companion of his childhood, by presenting her with all his own savings, in a silk-purse that had once belonged to his mother.

Old Forsyth never knew the amount of these savings ; nor did the grateful and almost overcome Jeannie ever learn by how many pains and privations, during his long absence in England, the devoted Alan had gathered up the sum he pressed on her, as from a friend and brother. Alan, now sadly practised in the art of smothering his feelings, got through this trial without suspicion ; and inspirited by such unlooked-for success, talked of being present at their Jeannie's wedding, with a sincere purpose of keeping his word.

But for this severe trial Alan had vainly believed himself sufficiently strong. On the morning of the happy day, at the very moment in which Jeannie, blushing and brightly-tearful as a dewy rose, was giving Malcolm her hand, to lead her to kirk, he was taken with a convulsive fit, which

those around, attributed to a previous day of remarkable bodily fatigue.

Although both bride and bridegroom were too anxiously helpful about Alan, to proceed to kirk without his company, when he recovered, he was found so much weakened by the convulsions, that every voice clamoured against the rashness of his attempting to join the marriage party.

Nothing loth, therefore, Alan was left for a while to solitude, and his father's arm chair; (old Forsyth having undertaken to give the bride away;) but left also to the balsaming conviction, that "if Malcolm Cameron were dearer to Jeannie Halliday than a' the world, he, puir Alan, was next to him in her regard; for O, the kind tears in Jeannie's eyes, as she stood looking on him! the kind tones o' her saft voice, as she guided Malcolm in holding him, and gently overruling his convulsed action!" Alan fancied, (and human infirmity made him, for the moment, not regret the fancy,) that Jeannie now guessed at his real case; and grieved for him. Next to being loved by Jeannie, was the being pitied by her, he thought; and this imagination soothed him, by degrees, into melancholy composure.

Alan was right. Jeannie's eyes had met a look from his during the interval of this fit, which let in broad-day upon her heart: the pang that look gave her, was the only drop of bitter in her brimming cup of felicity that day!—it was too bitter for sharing with her husband. Painful as this knowledge was of Alan's secret feelings, it yet proved useful and salutary: for it enabled Jeannie, afterwards, to spare those feelings which, otherwise, she would often have severely and unconsciously tasked. After she became settled as Malcolm Cameron's wife, she was delicate of showing her own happiness in too glaring a light before Alan; careful not to come too often into his society; and kindly, yet prudently, solicitous to testify a regard for him grateful to his heart, yet not such as to kindle one additional spark of forbidden passion.

The greater distance of Cameron's *Joy*, (as the warm-hearted sailor spontaneously named his small home,) from Brae Farm than from the Manse, formed a natural obstacle to very frequent meetings: Malcolm had his field business to attend to, and Jeannie her household concerns; and the elder Mrs. Cameron, not caring to leave her kind brother to solitude again, by going to live with her children,

claimed so much of their spare time, that with all the goodwill possible, the new-married pair could rarely do more than go once a week to take supper with old Forsyth. By this lucky concurrence of circumstances, Alan's agitated spirit was left time to recover steadiness and composure; so that, by degrees, his altered looks resumed their usual moderate share of healthfulness; and his dejected manner assumed a tone of thoughtful resignation, which passed upon ordinary observers for seriousness, either about worldly or spiritual matters.

He went, it is true, rarely to *the Joy*; but whenever he did so, it was with a generous, yet aching, sympathy with the happiness he saw there. Malcolm always welcomed him like a brother; and with a brother's free soul poured out his treasures of domestic bliss before him. Whenever poor Alan looked round the cheerful little dwelling, contrasting it with his own changed one, well did he note those treasures!

The clean white-washed walls of the kitchen glistening with snowy earthen ware and well-scoured brass: the prettily-papered parlour adorned with curiosities of Malcolm's bringing, and a buffet of his own carving: the chimney-places filled with summer-greens; the beds sheeted with spotless linen; the hospitable table covered with nicely dressed and wholesome food: the sloping garden gay in flowers, and rich in vegetables; the sweet-smelling dairy abundantly bestowing summer luxuries; and the peat-stack by the door providing comfort against winter: the well-kept fields and meadows beyond, with their thriving livestock; the bonnie burns and braes all round the house; and, yet more, the lovely and loving wife within!—these, these were treasures which the virtuous Alan feared to covet, should he look on them too often. He therefore gave himself more earnestly to home employments, and to serious readings with his pious father.

Months passed on thus,—months of rare felicity to the young couple at the Joy. Endeared to each other by their intimate knowledge of their mutual virtues, and by better experience of each other's sweet tempers, they found their comforts unruffled by a single adverse circumstance: not that cross accidents did not sometimes occur to them, as to their neighbours; but they early learnt to bless Heaven for

not sending misfortunes instead of vexations, and thus felt them less sensibly.

All important things went well with them. Both their land and their cattle made more than their expected returns. Jeannie's stout servant lass turned out a treasure of hard work and good humour; and Malcolm's only farming man proved honest and pains-taking. To crown all, ere the twelve months were complete, Jeannie became the safe and rapturous mother of a lovely girl. Who can paint, who need attempt painting, the transport of a young and attached pair, over their first-born? All who have either felt or witnessed such transports, must ably recall them. Malcolm and his wife were the happiest—fondest of parents; their affection for each other assumed a character of deeper tenderness, while bursts of doting admiration became the exclusive right of their child.

At eventide, when Malcolm returned home from field or market, nothing could be more lovely to look on, than the picture presented by his clean fire-side. Jeannie bending over her sleeping baby, with the bright eye and blooming cheek of eighteen, shaking back her long sunny hair, to smile up, and meet the eye and lip of her fond husband, as he hurried towards her. Never did Malcolm lock both wife and child in the same embrace, without audibly blessing Heaven for such treasures; and thus proving, that for a grateful heart there must be another trial besides happiness.

But it was not only to the father and mother that little Janet brought enjoyment; from the moment Alan Forsyth took her in his arms, and suffered his heart's secret to gush out over her in a burst of impetuous tears, from that moment his heart found an object to love without measure, as without fear. He found it in a helpless little being, who owed existence to the Jeannie he had loved so long and so dearly. From the hour Jeannie Halliday married, Alan never to his own thoughts dwelt on his disappointed passion, but as a thing which *had been*.

Only Cameron's mother was by when Alan Forsyth had the babe shown to him. She was a woman of great feeling: she understood his heart's history on the instant, and the tearful glance Jeannie exchanged with her, as Alan fastened his lips on the infant's brow, convinced her that what she conjectured was right. She and her daughter-in-law afterwards spoke upon the subject; when poor Alan's virtuous

and self-denying conduct was canvassed and commended by each, and Jeannie's behaviour to him, after she had begun to suspect his case, approved by Mrs. Cameron.

Jeannie was much relieved by his mother's knowledge of the only secret she had ever kept from her husband. While the knowledge was all her own, she feared and fancied the concealment wrong; yet Alan's integrity and sufferings merited such delicacy and forbearance at her hands; and were her Malcolm acquainted with it, his own happiness must be alloyed, as her's was, by the consciousness of embittering a kind friend's peace.

Under Mrs. Cameron's eye, Jeannie now felt securely sheltered: she no longer hesitated giving Alan a cordial welcome to the Joy, but openly administered, as far as she properly might, to his comfort and entertainment.

Alan soon became a more frequent visiter at the Joy, and more urgent for his friend's visits in return; but his motive could not be mistaken. It was evident to every body, that he had taken an instant fancy to Malcolm Cameron's bairn, and most likely, if he lived and died a bachelor, would make her his heiress.

Malcolm Cameron's content was now full. He saw the friend he valued, not only for his own sake, but for the sake of her to whom he considered him always as a brother; he saw this valued friend shaking off the clog of what the generous Malcolm thought degrading, because needless worldly care; finding delight in a pure and permitted affection. He saw the social smile upon his lips; heard him laugh, bless, sing to the babe, and he could now and then magnanimously forgive him for usurping possession of its coral kiss.

To a young father's heart, nothing seems so natural as idolatry of his child; and Malcolm Cameron, therefore, entertained not a single suspicion of what had been the origin of this extraordinary devotion. Unfeigned, however, was Alan Forsyth's idolatry of the little Janet: he soon loved her entirely for her own sweet sake. Rapidly-growing partiality individualized her, separated her from her mother's once adored image, and left the feeling he now freely indulged in, pure and guiltless as its object. The babe early learnt to distinguish Alan, and at the sound of his voice, would turn her smiling face, and stretch out her little arms towards him, with a cooing welcome. Such acknowledgment ever gave him evident transport; and at such times

he would gaze on the innocent with a fond, yet timid tenderness, which Cameron, kindly observing, would encourage, by exclaiming,—“What for dinna ye tak the wean? I dinna begrudge her to ye, man! I only wish ye had sic a wife and bairn o’ ye’re ain, to doat on.”—“Gi’ me my wee wifey here,” Alan would stoutly answer, “an’ I carena for ony ither, noo.”

Even while witnessing this fondness for their child, neither parent had a single thought of future fortune in consequence; nay, they were surprised, often troubled, by the lavish presents of toys and clothes, which Alan was constantly bringing for “his wee Janet.” Little did they dream, that, in addition to their amicable quarrels with him for such extravagance, the soft-hearted Alan had to contend with more serious vexation on the same subject from his father.

Old Forsyth was at first pleased, and proud of the Camerons’ lovely babe; but when he saw it occupying such a large proportion of his son’s time and affection, he began to feel both angry and disappointed. Thus do “tares” ever spring up among the “wheat” of worldly happiness.

Alan had long evaded every proposal for marrying, where he might have married wealthily, and, in his father’s estimation, happily. This passion for another man’s child, seemed to render him still more indifferent about having one of his own; and the good old father felt, therefore, as most fathers would probably do, somewhat irritated at its innocent cause. Alan, conscious of faultiness in thus disappointing a natural wish, but as certain that in pledging a true heart at the altar to any other woman than the one lost to him, he would be guilty of yet greater sin, bore meekly with his father’s anger, and at length silenced it. Upon every other matter, old Forsyth found his son obedient, and obedient with willing alacrity. His good sense and better principle, by degrees, therefore, reconciled him to Alan’s obstinacy on this only important point.

In mutual good offices, and cordial companionship between the families of the Brae Farm, the Manse, and the Joy, month after month glided on, till towards the end of the second year, a new blessing was expected for the Camerons, in the birth of another child. But over this infant’s birth gathered the first clouds that had yet darkened their happiness—they were storm-clouds. Only a few days after its birth, Malcolm’s uncle, the worthy minister, whose roof

had sheltered his mother, died suddenly, leaving his affairs greatly perplexed by too liberal an exercise of charity, with limited means and as small a stock of worldly talent.—Having been cruelly drawn into a law-suit by a designing attorney, the money intended to discharge his annual bills had been all drained from him, so that he died in debt. Cameron's honourable and grateful heart too hastily prompted him to become answerable for those debts; trusting to his own industry and fair prospects for discharging them by instalments, without material injury to the dear persons solely dependant upon him.

But the storm was now gathering fast: Malcolm Cameron's sun of prosperity was about to sink, behind clouds big with future ruin. A large sum of money, (all in fact that he possessed in the world, except the stock upon his farm,) was lying in a bank at Dundee, for payment of his rent, and for a purchase of lean kine to fatten, when the bank broke, with it, nearly the heart of Malcolm Cameron.

It was long ere he could venture to impart the woful tidings to his Jeannie, whose delicate state, with their newborn boy at her breast, rendered such a shock dangerous. But Jeannie, after her first agonizing floods of tears, roused herself to support the heart far dearer than her own; and by the sweet contentedness with which she soon planned a new and humbled way of life for them, increased her husband's affliction, with his love even to agony.

Whether it is that men by having it more in their power than women have, to better or to shatter their fortunes, feel disgraced by adverse changes, I presume not to say; but true it is, that under all such dispensations, men evidently allow the passions of pride and shame to mix with those of anguish for the pains and privations consequent on pecuniary ruin. They suffer therefore more excessively on such occasions than women do. Even Malcolm Cameron's brave and noble nature, was not without such taint of "original sin." He cleared his brow, and cheered up his voice and smile, it is true, when in Jeannie's presence; but no sooner was he alone, than his whole spirit gave way, and the passionate bursts of his grief, shook his sorrowing mother nearly to dissolution.—A son so naturally comes with his griefs to his mother's arms!

Leave the Joy! his bairns beggars! his Jeannie, his soft-handed Jeannie, obligated to do a' the wark o' a servant! his puir sickly mither, wi' her head hardly aff the

flints o' wae an' want, again to pit it down there ! and he bound for his respeckit uncle too ! na—it was owre much for sinfu' man t' bear ; an' unless the gude Lord wad be his stay, he felt his puir brain wadna' stand it."

Calamity, indeed, had found the once-thoughtless sailor too young and too happy for immediate submission. The shock was too sudden for such youth and such happiness together, to sustain ; and he must have sunk entirely under its weight, had not what seemed a providential proposal, rallied back his spirits and his powers.

On the first rumour of their friend's misfortune, Alan Forsyth had eagerly seized upon his father's honest concern for the husband of his Jeannie, and had got the old man to offer to become responsible for the next twelve-month's rent of their farm, besides proposing to help them with ready money, provided Cameron could be persuaded to take the risk of clearing himself gradually by the profits. But Cameron saw Jeannie unwilling, or, as he thought, fearful of going far upon any, save sure ground ; and thankfully declining this, he fell with greater readiness into a proposal made by his former captain. This was to go out to sea again with him, as supercargo, to the Levant ; for which Cameron would not only receive a liberal salary, but so highly did Captain Macdonald estimate his ability, and the essential use of his thorough acquaintance with the lingua Franca, and so much did he compassionate his present unmerited misfortunes, that he would freely allow him a given per centage upon every article of barter or exchange taken out.

By moderate calculation, these profits would wholly ex-  
tricate Cameron ; and, with such a cheering prospect before him, he presented himself at once to his creditors, stated his situation, and received their consent to his honest purpose. He then gratefully arranged with Adam and Alan Forsyth, that they should take the live and dead stock on his farm at a fair valuation, taking the farm itself into their hands, to work for their own loss or profit, (paying the rent,) during his absence ; that his family was to continue living in the house at a much reduced rent, (for Malcolm would pay something,) and that such rent was to be taken out of the sum given him for his stock ; the remainder being left for Jeannie and his careful mother, to make the most of, till his return. If at that happy period he should indeed be able to clear the claims against him, Adam Forsyth



bound himself to restore the farm, with all originally belonging to it; receiving again the price paid down for the stock.

These promising arrangements made, Malcolm Cameron once more raised his open brow "at kirk and hame." In many a fond embrace he stifled the sobs and tears of his tender Jeannie; flattering her with joyous auguries of future comfort, nay, of future abundance, when he should return from the Levant. But Jeannie's tears only flowed the faster for this. Pains, privations, penury, never-ceasing toil, she had contemplated with unshrinking fortitude; but separation from Malcolm, the father of the unconscious innocents smiling between their knees, was to her insupportable. Now she felt "how much the husband is dearer than the father;" for now she wondered that she had ever lived through the long nights of tearful watching, and dismal storm-hearkening, which had rendered Malcolm's last absence so memorable.

Cameron, meanwhile, strengthened by a firm persuasion that he was doing right;—and the more readily believing this, from the yearning of his own heart to stay with those dearer to him than all that heart's blood,—Cameron continued to soothe, and reason, and inculcate submission to Heaven's evident decree, till at length he succeeded in bringing Jeannie's mind into a better frame. That done, he had no more to struggle against; for his mother's sorrow was a silent one. She was disciplined by the trials of more than fifty years; and she felt in common with every self-slighting mother, that her grief ought not to be heard, where there was one yet keener, and more privileged. She shed her foreboding tears, therefore, alone, and unsuspected.

It was the end of July when the good ship Andrew was to sail from the Tay.

The night before the morning on which Cameron was to join her, he had spent with his friends and his family, in the open air; enjoying the sweetness of a fine calm evening under a favourite arbour of Jeannie's (which his hands had interlaced with willows and rose-trees,) listening to the summer sound of the distant cuckoo.

There, striving to make this last evening less mournful than it would otherwise have been, he looked at, and talked of Heaven's bounties poured over all animate and inanimate things; taking occasion to insinuate from such bounty,

confidence in the same Almighty goodness for every other blessing, to those who thankfully acknowledge the great Giver. Thus cheering all by his cheerfulness, Malcolm did not impart the last pious deduction drawn by his own thoughts from a sense of Almighty superintendence ; namely, that the same goodness might see fit to work its creature's ultimate happiness, by more awful means than those of success in a virtuous enterprise. He felt the solemn conviction, and bowed silently to it.

As Cameron was to call for Alan Forsyth's company on the morrow, in his way to Dundee, there was no leave-taking when they separated now. After the Forsyths were gone, Malcolm continued sitting under the arbour with Jeannie's hand in his, watching by her side the tremulous glimmer of the faint summer stars, as they appeared one by one in the slowly-darkening sky ; his thoughts full of days past, present, and to come ; when the stillness of the night, and the deeper stillness of Jeannie's gathering grief, was broken in upon by the sound of some one singing at no great distance. It was a young man going home, after visiting his sweetheart, most likely, for, with a voice of much natural expressiveness, he sang the following song :

Waes me ! waes me ! the bonnie bush,  
That bears the simmer rose !  
Mair dear to me that bonnie bush,  
Than a' the wood-tree's boughs ;  
For O, the hours that I ha' spent  
Aneath its pleasant bower,  
An' for my Jean, an' by her side,  
Pu'd mony a winsome flower ;

An' match'd the red rosc wi' her cheek,  
The blue-bell wi' her e'e ;  
An' mock'd the thought, say fy was I,  
That parted we suld be.  
But noo I wander a' my lane,  
Wi' heart baith sad an' sair ;  
For hame, an' Jean, an' bonnie bower,  
I never shall see mair !

The tears that had been crowding thicker and thicker into Jeannie's eyes whilst this song was singing, now overflowed ; and throwing herself with a passionate burst upon the neck of her husband, she wept there long and convulsively.—“ Jeannie !—my ain Jeannie !” was all Malcolm himself could utter ; repeating the tender phrase again and again,

and straining her against his heart, throbbing with a husband's and a father's agonized pulsation.

But Jeannie could not answer him ; and she continued to weep violently, heart-breakingly, till his over-mastered spirit gave way too, and their tears then flowed together.

When nature was relieved, or exhausted, and Jeannie slowly raised her eyes, as she still lay on her husband's shoulder, she saw the bright star Malcolm had pointed out to her on the night he first spoke to her of love, shedding what seemed a gracious light upon them both.

"That blessed star," she said, in a softened whisper, "I can never see it, Malcolm, without minding me o' dear days gane by : whan ye're awa', I'll try to think it shines sae bleezing like, just to light an' bless my sailor."

"Do sae, my ain dearie!" cried Malcolm, thankful for the cheering notion ; "an' na doubt, gif ye add a prayer till it, na harm will ever happen to ye're true sailor. Sae noo, let us gang in doors, my bonnie binnie."

Thus speaking, he tenderly drew her away, and entered their own quiet dwelling. Soon afterwards they retired to bed ; there alternately to watch and weep by each other's side, in sad, sad companionship, or to join in fervent prayer for a happy re-union after brief separation.

The next morning Cameron hastily swallowed a six o'clock breakfast ; the first meal his wife's hand could not prepare for him. When it was over, and the lad who was to ride with the baggage was getting through with his substantial repast, the husband and wife's agony began. Jeannie, quite over-wrought by previous struggle with herself, fell upon the breast of her Malcolm's mother, in sad abandonment to tears and cries.

"Haud her, mither ; haud her !" Cameron exclaimed, white and shaking ; "gif ance I tak' her here, (striking his labouring heart) I sall never let her awa'."

He made a few hasty steps towards the door while speaking, as if proposing to leave her then ; but returning, walked with better-governed feelings to the other end of the parlour.

While Jeannie remained sobbing on Mrs. Cameron's shoulder, Malcolm continued walking backwards and forwards, not venturing to approach nearer to his wife and mother, yet gazing on them at intervals with piercing tenderness.

Often did he stop in his sad walk, to stoop and pat his mother's cat and his own dog; oftener, to glance at his Jeannie's parrot, going, as usual, its well-known round of talk and noises. To him there was pain and pleasure in the bird's unmeaning repetitions of his Jeannie's lesson, "my ain Malcolm! my han'some Malcolm!" and he listened to them with a full and yielding heart. But the trial was lasting too long: he cast an anxious look at the window to see for Jock and the horses, then hastily approached his wife and mother, and locked them both in his arms.

At the down-pour of his eyes, Jeannie's head fell back against his breast, with a suffocating gasp. "Bless ye! my mither!—bless ye! my saul's dearest!" was all Malcolm could articulate, in a faint voice, as he rent himself from them. "Our bairns, Malcolm,—our bairns." Cameron looked back upon his wife from the door-way. That look said he had already blessed his children, and durst not go to them again:—it was the last he gave her; and with it, he disappeared.

A second afterwards, Jeannie heard the starting set-off of the horses from the house door; she ran to the window, but he was gone! then she lost further consciousness in the arms of Malcolm's mother.

The remainder of that miserable day Jeannie spent on her knees; for only by praying for her husband could she quell those transports of sorrow, which frightened her at herself, and threatened additional wo to her helpless babes. Let those who would too severely arraign her for such excess of grief, remember that Jeannie was a wife and a mother, and barely nineteen: an age at which few of us have learned the hard art of "stilling the nerve whence agony is born," and at which fewer attain to greater progress in Christian virtue, than to a sincere belief of resignation being our duty; coupled with very imperfect practice of the duty so acknowledged.

How visibly does a father's tenderness mingle even in the necessary severity of our Heavenly Father's correction or trial of his creatures!—no sooner have we parted with a beloved person, than we think of re-union with them. Parting over, the tide has turned; it is now running towards the happy hour of meeting; the passion of our mind has changed too, and fond expectation succeeds to sad anticipation.

With such natural tenacity of happiness, or rather of

hope, Jeannie, by degrees began to talk of her husband's return, instead of perpetually reverting to the pain of separation; she looked on her lovely babes oftener with a smile than a tear, rejoicing in the thought of her Malcolm's transport when he should behold them again. She called to mind that only a few months' absence was in prospect; that she was left among kind friends, whose generous assistance had already softened pangs which otherwise would have been insupportable; cheerful, nay, grateful submission was therefore her duty. She must now, she thought, wipe away her tears, and do her best towards preserving what Providence had spared from their wrecked fortunes.

Animated by the hope of her husband's approbation hereafter, she became doubly active and diligent in every department of her diminished household. That her Malcolm should come back, to find all he loved, and had left, was her constant anxiety. For this, she watched every shade over his mother's feeble health,—every look, every breathing of her children;—carefully guarded every little memorial of his talent, or his tenderness; preserved even the bits of furniture most familiar to his use, therefore sanctified to her eye; nay, often forced her shrouded looks to brighten up, because Malcolm loved the light of her eye, and the bloom of her cheek, and he must not find them gone.

Under the influence of such thoughts, refreshed and strengthened by constant attendance in the house of God, cheerfulness once more dwelt on Jeannie's face, and diffused itself over all the inhabitants of the Joy. At the end of four months, Jeannie might begin to count the weeks on which the Andrew was expected in the Tay;—another four, or five, or six at furthest.

Alan Forsyth's kind sympathy was always prompting something cheering. He came with favourable remarks upon the winds, the moon, the lucky clearness of the skies; or he had some gladdening tale to tell of prosperous adventures to the same seas whence the Andrew was coming; or he guessed largely what Cameron must have made by his voyage; and he drew flattering pictures of Cameron's transport at sight of his wife and children, and the home he loved. Alan grudged not such happy visions to Jeannie; though of Jeannie he no longer thought but as the best of wives to the friend most valued. His submitted spirit

looked no more for any happiness peculiarly its own; or rather, it sought and found the blessing, in so loving others (to whom he was secondary,) as really to derive nearly equal joy with them from all that ministered to their felicity.

The little Janet lived almost in Alan's arms; for though Malcolm's boy was a young angel, with the sunny locks, and sunnier smile of its mother, to Alan the deep, dark gaze of those innocent eyes, which had first lulled his heart into peace, was worth all the glow and glitter of the infant Ronald. He was never weary of blessing and bestowing on her.

But so scrupulous was Jeannie not to incur new debts and obligation, that she not only persisted in refusing presents of house-consumption for herself, but delicately insinuated to Alan her averseness to accept gifts for her children. She continued resolutely living within the narrow income she had parcelled out for each month of her husband's probable absence, and so rendered it impossible for her kindest friends to insist that she needed their assistance.

December passed—another week—now another day, and the Andrew must be heard of. "To-morrow we shall hear of him!" To-morrow came: no Malcolm! The next to-morrow then! it came—it went—no tidings yet! Day after day wore out; first they went laggingly, then they speeded; frightfully speeded! for friends, family, mere news-tellers, all at length expected that every fresh day would bring some disastrous news.

What a changed scene was there now by that once cheerful fire-side, where Jeannie had so lately sat, nursing one dear babe, while Mrs. Cameron smoothed the soft hair of the other,—talking of Malcolm's return, and fancying the how and the when of their meeting!

Now, they either sat by the neglected peat-reak, gazing on it without consciousness, stupified by previous expectation and disappointments; or Jeannie walked wildly to and fro, wringing her hands, calling on her husband's and children's names, repeating every former omen of disaster and death, hitherto forgotten: often rushing forward to throw herself at Mrs. Cameron's feet, beseeching her to pray for her, that she might keep her senses and never do harm to herself.

How many deaths did that poor mother's heart go through during these scenes! Her groans were stifled; her tears were stopped; or if she wept, it was pitiably over the agonized form of her by turns half-frenzied, half-lifeless daughter.

Every household duty was now forgotten by Jeannie—nay, even every thought of future provision; her mind could not stretch beyond the present preservation of her children: the poor babes were always on her breast or in her hand, day and night. She talked to them of their father—wept their father over their unconscious heads—soon called them her fatherless babes, and herself their widowed mother! None who heard Jeannie, could in their secret minds, refuse sad credence to her wild assertions, that she should never behold her Malcolm more? that he lay now underneath the salt sea; and few could refuse their pity, even to her impatient sorrow, when they heard her prophesy her own death in consequence. But such listeners had only to remind her of her children and Christian obligations, to awaken her to a sense of her selfishness and sinfulness; and therefore to rouse her, for awhile at least, to struggle with despair.

Often when Mrs. Cameron saw her tearless, and wandering in her mind, from long strains of expectations suddenly excited and as suddenly baffled, she would take her in her feeble arms, exclaiming, "O my puir bairn! ha' some mind o' ye're mither—ye're Malcolm's mither!"—and at that tender adjuration, Jeannie's tears would burst forth with salutary, softening violence.

Transports of grief, like transports of joy, are beyond human power long to sustain; they exhaust both body and mind too much for continuance; but they are too often replaced by an inward and eating sorrow, which, if it does not destroy life itself, strips life of all its enjoyments, and the heart of all its capacities of enjoyment.

Jeannie sunk into a state of settled uncomplaining hopelessness; and because she struggled no more, believed herself resigned. So deceitful is our frail nature, and so long are we of attaining to real Christian submission! It is true, she no longer spent her days in aimless wanderings and wild conjectures, but went steadily through all needful employments, with a sort of silent despatch, which seemed to say, she felt the time of her existence would be short, and that

she must hasten to leave nothing undone. Still, her thoughts were principally fixed upon her husband in his watery grave : she could not yet raise her eyes to that husband in heaven, and wish only to be found worthy of joining him there ;— she did not yet contemplate her children's loss in him, as both provider and parent.

It was otherwise with Mrs. Cameron. From the first moment in which Alan Forsyth had sadly and confidentially told her that he had been to all the persons concerned in the ship Andrew, and had found each of them painfully persuaded that ship and crew would never more be heard of—from that moment she had unceasingly sought support where alone it may be given, and had obtained the grace she asked.

Accounts had been received of a dreadful storm in the Mediterranean at the period when the Andrew was supposed to have been off the coast where the greater number of wrecks had taken place ; and in this storm so many vessels had foundered, names and countries unknown, that it was no longer possible to doubt that the Andrew was one of these. The little "cruse" of money which Cameron had left between his wife and mother, was by this time drained ; and Alan Forsyth, without his father's continued assistance, could not replenish it. Want and woe thus threatening them, Mrs. Cameron was obliged to discuss the wretched subject, not merely with their faithful friend, but with Jeannie herself.

When this new gulf yawned under her eyes, Jeannie started from her lethargy : she acknowledged her sinful refusal of all comfort, while yet there were grounds of consolation and causes for thankfulness ; and she felt that to preserve what Providence had left her, she must no longer repine at what his hand had taken away.

With a mother's instant resolution, she met the anguish of hearing, altering, settling plans for giving bread to her children, without degrading them into beggars, or tainting her own fair fame by accepting private support from Alan Forsyth.

In the virtuous determination of earning her own subsistence, Mrs. Cameron strengthened her by alternate exhortations and praises ; and by a repetition of those sacred promises which are the staff of sorrow. Application was made to a neighbouring lady, of more benevolence than for-



tune; for counsel and succour : the result was, Jeannie's removal to Dundee, where she was given apartments for herself and family, with a small stipend in addition, as superintendant of a school instituted by a wealthy manufacturer for the children employed in his manufactory. In this fatiguing task she was not assisted by Mrs. Cameron, whose deplorable health rendered such settled duty impossible ; but Mrs. Cameron managed to make up to Jeannie's own little ones for the many hours their poor mother was obliged to devote to the children of others ; and the sight of her fatherless babes well and happy, was ever a solace and a blessing to the desolate widow. Even to distant Dundee, Alan Forsyth's faithful friendship followed the yet lovely object of his first love.

If the widowed Jeannie Cameron had no longer the carnation cheek and glittering eye of the maiden Jeannie Halliday, there was a paleness in that cheek, and a tale in that tearful eye, which went deeper into Alan Forsyth's heart than all their former brightness.—That wasted form, passing before him with the soundless step, and the silent sadness of a ghost, was an object of such pure yet passionate interest to his virtuous heart, that, firmly believing Malcolm Cameron was no longer in life, he once more yielded himself up, not to hope, nor even yet to wishes, but simply to love—unchecked, unsullied, self-permitted love ! Not till the moment in which Jeannie became sensible that Alan looked upon her now, as he had used to do in her day of earliest youth,—not till then did she completely believe that every person had given up the Andrew and her crew as past all hope.

It may be supposed that a new fit of desolating anguish followed this new conviction. For a while, the pious frame of her soul was shaken ;—she had to wrestle long and hard against her own infirmity : but the conflict was sustained ;—it was gone through ;—and again the widowed Jeannie returned to battle with the world's iron cares, for the existence of her children and of her husband's mother.

Except from a conscientious discharge of duty to her employer, and fond observation of her children's growth in lovehousness and affection, Jeannie had nothing to sweeten her bitter lot. She was yet too young to live without more happiness. Her heart, that once basked in the sunshine of a dear husband's love and generous character, now sat under

a perpetual shadow. Apprehensions for her children's future fate too often robbed their innocent smiles of the power to charm, and made her feel as if life were utterly joyless. In addition to this, a monotonous return of sedentary tasks, carried on in unwholesome rooms in the centre of a bustling town, and that town the seaport whence her Malcolm sailed on his disastrous voyage, was not calculated to cheer the spirits or invigorate the frame. Jeannie consequently became subject to the many nameless indispositions which have their source in the heart's sad aching.

After every interval between his visits to Dundee, Alan Forsyth observed the rapid decay of her looks and her strength with the deepest concern;—more grieved was he to feel that Jeannie's afflicted glance reproved his eyes whenever they were resting on her with an expression of more than sympathy. Again Alan's respectful long-enduring love shrank back, closing itself up in bleeding silence.

By degrees he discontinued his visits to Dundee, denying himself even the blameless delight of listening to the pretty prattle of his "wee wifey," who now began to talk that imperfect language which has, from the beginning of time, drawn the philosopher from his study, the statesman from his councils, and the warrior from his shouting legions, to listen to it alone. But Alan, while constraining himself on one point essential, he saw, to Jeannie's peace of mind, claimed the privilege of a god-father, and having gained Mrs. Cameron's voice on his side, insisted on sending an annual sum for little Janet's clothing. This kindness was offered so kindly, and pressed with such delicacy, that Jeannie, with a gush of tears to the memory of him who had been the child's natural provider, consented to accept the gift.

At the termination of the second year after the supposed loss of the Andrew, a distant cousin of her captain entered into quiet possession of the worthy seaman's property, as being next of kin; no one considering themselves entitled to dispute his rights, or to institute a question as to the legality of such possession until Captain Macdowall's death were ascertained. Alan Forsyth was not so easily contented: he had often heard Capt. Macdowall say, with every appearance of sincerity, that whenever he died, Malcolm Cameron would find that he had done something for "the

bonnie boy-bairn that was ca'ed after him." Alan, therefore, set about seeking for a will.

The heir-at-law, (a man of low habits,) persisted in averring that none had been found; and Alan had no other course than advertising. A reward was promised to any one who could produce such a document, or give information of its existence.

For the means of thus trying to benefit the desolate family of poor Cameron, Alan was indebted to his father's early fondness for Jeannie. Old Forsyth pitied, and loved her still; and not very reluctantly parted from the object of his increasing attachment, money, to raise her from the brink of ruin. But he was rapidly estranging from her, by trouble on her account, by distance of place, by vexation at the hold her children had taken upon his son's affections, and soured by Alan's obstinate resolution of dying a bachelor. Fretted by all this, he privately settled his affairs, bequeathing all he possessed to his son, with power to leave it in his turn to his wife or lawful offspring; but otherwise entailing it on a wealthy nephew and his natural heirs. Very soon after this secret act, the old man died; and Alan, while learning that he was master of Brae Farm, with a considerable sum of ready money, found himself for ever restricted from bequeathing any part of such fortune to the fatherless babes at Dundee. A small legacy to Jeannie, was, however, some palliation of this painful disappointment; and having given her in it the only solid comfort he had yet procured for her, he directly began a more vigorous search after a will of Captain Macdowall's, than his former fettered powers had permitted.

Numerous and repeated advertisements were, at length, noticed by a letter from North America. An attorney, lately emigrated thither, wrote to say he could give oath to the fact of his having drawn up a regularly-attested document, (of which he could happily produce the original rough draft,) in which Ronald, the son of Malcolm Cameron, was left the sum of 2000*l.*, when he should attain the age of twenty-one, his parents meanwhile receiving the interest of such sum for his and their use. But as this attestation could not, the lawyer knew, be singly available, he mentioned the names of two persons who had witnessed the regular will, assuring Alan that if these could be brought forward, their oaths, with his, would be sufficient to substan-

tiate little Ronald's claim; and that, in such case, the infant's relations might think it worth their while to have the attorney over from America, for the purpose of swearing to the facts he stated.

Alan had no hesitation in adopting the course recommended. He had neither wife nor child; and so that at his death he should transmit to his next of kin, the farm and funded property left by his father, he might spend his income, and dispose of his own savings exactly as he pleased: he therefore began at once to spend profusely and save rigorously.

His pursuit of one of the witnesses to Captain Macdowall's will was successful: but the other, being a sea-faring man, gone in an English China-ship to Canton, could not be brought forward for at least a twelvemonth; and even then, he might never return from the East.

Alan was too prudent, and too much in earnest, not to decide that it was wise to secure all he could of testimony, likely to have a happy influence upon the fate of Cameron's distressed family. He therefore brought back the expatriated lawyer; and in despite of low abuse, and wicked insinuation from the profligate relative of Captain Macdowall, succeeded in so far substantiating the claim of the infant Ronald, that it only remained for the oath of John Henderson, from China, to be decided in the child's favour.

The expense of all this was startling; and to meet it, Alan was unwillingly obliged to part with his lease of the Joy Farm, together with its stock. But it was for Malcolm Cameron's son he did it, and Malcolm Cameron would no more return to buy back the much-loved residence!

To describe the state of Jeannie's mind during the progress of this momentous business, is almost impossible. Her heart was torn by contradictory hopes and fears. She shuddered at the prospect of owing the fortune of her child to one who loved her, as she knew Alan had done—perhaps did even now;—one, too, so generously self-denying! Yet not to let him go on in the generous attempt, was beyond a mother's power of sacrifice. And then, the blessed fortune itself! How came it? From the last testament of him with whose fate her Malcolm's was inseparably connected. Captain Macdowall's will proved, was her Malcolm's death proved!

Poor Jeannie! Still, still were there moments when, in

the loneliness of night, and the desolation of remembered happiness, she besought God to restore her husband; prayed, that if he were yet living, whether on desert island, or far-off country; mutilated in body, or distempered in mind, her life might be prolonged to behold him once more. Jeannie had long since ceased to utter such wild hope, or name such extravagant prayer, even to Malcolm's mother. She feared now, that there was shame and sin in thinking of any objects except her children. Upon these poor babes, indeed, was fixed all of her sad heart which was not with the drowned Malcolm. She marked their growing charms of intellect and countenance with a mother's pride and transport. She saw her Malcolm's manly beauty dawning more and more in her little Ronald; the germs of the same frank, and fearless, and noble character were visible in his infant habits and affections; whilst in Janet, a thoughtful, almost pensive, sensibility, seemed given the child to endear her to the youthful mother, whose heart yet yearned for a watching tenderness; and who was long ere she could endure the sight of artless joyfulness, even in her children.

Janet, at five years old, was capable of tears for her father, and of caresses meant to soothe a mother's sorrows; often when they were alone would that bereaved mother balsam her bleeding heart's-wound, by making the tearful child lift her little hands in supplication to Heaven for the parent of whom her infant memory retained not a trace, but whose imagined idea she treasured with filial worship.

It may seem strange to say, that even at that early age the poor child felt the sacredness of sorrow; never once repeating to others those melancholy vigils;—but those alone who have never been so disciplined, may remain unconvinced, that the infant mind is soon schooled by witnessing suffering. Time went on. The English China-ship was not heard of till after the period she was expected: even then she brought disappointments. John Henderson had left her at Bombay for a coast-trader, and new modes of obtaining his important attestation were to be resorted to. This was essential, as the other witness to Captain Macdowall's will could only swear to the fact of having signed with John Henderson; Henderson could swear to the contents.

With preparing and despatching fresh copies of the necessary documents and instructions the fifth year closed; the sixth began. Dismal was the opening of that sixth year to Cameron's wife and mother; for accident brought to the port of Leith a sailor, who had seen the Andrew founder off the coast of Africa, when the vessel he was in, was herself in too shattered and perilous a state to give the slightest assistance; and his plain testimony at once settled one question, maliciously beginning to be agitated by the cousin of Captain Macdowall; namely, whether it would not be unlawful for an award of property to be given upon any will of his kinsman's, unless that kinsman's death could be proved.

When this sad and sealing testimony was cautiously communicated to Jeannie by the heart-broken mother, the latter tried to soften the blow, by previously dwelling on the ruinous consequences to themselves, and the useless unreturnable obligation they would have incurred from Alan Forsyth, should the law refuse to consider Captain Macdowall's property inheritable on the plea of his possible reappearance. She tried to awaken such anxiety for her boy's provision in the mind of the poor mother, as might feebly weaken her anguish when she should learn that her husband's death was now ascertained,—and in some measure she succeeded.

Jeannie listened to her with mingled sobs and prayers; still as Mrs. Cameron pressed on her the sense of mercy, with this extinction of hope, her raised and streaming eyes told that, for herself, starvation and hope would have been preferable to this fearful certainty, with all the wealth of the world in addition; but she acknowledged God's graciousness, in ordaining, that what carried death to her selfish desires, should give life perhaps to her children.

Distress of another kind was connected with this public testimonial of Malcolm Cameron's death. Jeannie was harassed by the addresses of her employer's son, a young thoughtless man, of violent passions, who was ready to run all present risks for the sake of possessing her, but who was likely enough to hate her six months afterwards for marring his prospects.

Sunk as poor Jeannie's heart was under a load of care as well as of sorrow, she was still beautiful; for she was yet young. Whilst youth continues, real beauty may

change its character, from the effect of grief or sickness, but it only changes its mode of power over the eye and the soul.

Jeannie's form had lost its luxuriancy ; but its proportions were become more delicate, its character more interesting ; her cheek was neither so rounded, nor so blooming as in her days of happiness ; but it had the whiteness and clearness of the lily ; and vanishing hues (springing from sudden emotion) coloured it at moments with an unearthly degree of beauty.

This pure and spirit-like complexion, the fine line of her features, the tender sadness of her deeply-fringed, down-cast eyes, and the affecting air of youth which surrounded her, were perhaps heightened in their effect by her widow's dress. As she walked to kirk, leading in either hand her two fatherless babes, the deep, yet chastised sorrow which sat upon her fair brow, and the tearful tenderness with which she occasionally regarded her prattling children, touched every beholder.

Many an eye, as it followed "the bonnie Jeannie Cameron," had a tear in it! Many an honest heart longed for the power of raising the lost husband and father from his watery bed!

Such wishes were not those of young Blair ; his senses were alone concerned in his passion for the youthful widow ; and so beautiful, in his estimation, was "the glass-skin he could amaisit spy thro' ; and the sma' waist he could far mair than span ; and the bit foot na' bigger than a liddy's !" —that he would have thought any change in them dearly bought by more happiness and better health in the admired object herself. After public proof of Malcolm Cameron's death, this overbearing suitor's importunities became so irksome, and his father appeared so little inclined to trust in Jeannie's determined resistance, that she suddenly saw herself obliged to give up the situation she held, and seek subsistence elsewhere.

At this juncture fain would Alan Forsyth have offered her the shelter of the roof which had protected her childhood ; but in no way durst he propose it. The heart he loved was already nearly crushed by its weight of obligation to him, and would not hear of more. With a grieved spirit he saw her and hers removed into a small cotter's house (on a distant moorland,) which they were to share with the man

and his wife ; there Jeannie and Mrs. Cameron hoped to earn a subsistence by spinning, until the expected fortune of little Ronald might allow them to live in ease and comfort.

But thither new calamities followed. Mrs. Cameron, in consequence of great exposure to cold on a mud floor, had a long rheumatic fever, from which she was scarcely recovered so as to move without assistance, ere little Janet took the measles ; and her subsequent recovery was so slow, that Jeannie's small legacy from old Forsyth was entirely drained, and, for the first time in her life, she voluntarily begged the assistance of Alan.

It was little that she borrowed, after all ; yet that little, she believed, preserved her darling's life ; and never did she hold the wine to Janet's lips (which his kindness enabled her to give) without feeling an absolute pang of gratitude. Sufficient as Alan Forsyth's means were for relieving such distress as Jeannie's, nay, of bestowing on her, had she chosen it, many an humble luxury, they were drops of water to an ocean, when employed in prosecuting a search after an obscure individual in such a wide and distant land as India. He felt this truth every day, in the every-day sacrifices he was forced to make that he might carry it on even imperfectly ; and he sighed with generous sorrow to think he should have nothing to bequeath the fatherless children of Malcolm Cameron, when it should please heaven to call him also to another world.

Since Jeannie's removal to her new residence, Alan had only trusted himself with one or two distant visits ; it was almost beyond his endurance to see her so fallen. She was removed, it is true, from the narrow "wyndes" and close air of a trading town ; from the frowns and suspicious looks of a hard employer ; from the audacious pursuit of a purse proud though ardent suitor ; and from all those contumelies which the better educated, when sunk to poverty, meet from the thoughtless and unfeeling of every class ;—but she was barely sheltered from the inclemencies of the weather by a roof and four damp walls ; she, and the sickly Mrs Malcolm, had to toil all day, and half night, to earn the pittance which was to supply all their wants ; and this might last Jeannie's life, —all their lives !—provided the will were not substantiated ; and Alan's days not prolonged, to gather up a fresh fund in lieu of that which was now exhausted. Alan saw that



Jeannie had brought her spirit under entire subjection to the Divine will in the removal of her husband; nay, that she began to confide more firmly in the same goodness for the future destinies of her children, and to draw that consolation from pious rumination which is the blessed reward of the Christian's struggle with his unsubmitting nature. But this right and happy temper could not cancel present suffering;—existing suffering is a real evil,—and his heart bled to observe what she endured, while forced to let her husband's mother bear her feeble part in those labours which poverty and helpless children accumulate. To Jeannie, whose earliest habit had been that of ministering to age, and infirmity, and want, (humble as her means ever were,)—to her, the bitterness of imposing tasks upon Mrs. Cameron for their mutual advantage was beyond expression. What agony, to mark in her mother the hollow eye and ghastly cheek; the often-attempted smile; the crowding irrepressible tears of bodily weakness, as often endeavoured to be dispersed;—to know her ill able to do any thing, yet obliged to let her do much; to see her faint, yet have no cordial to present, nor even a few minutes to spare for the purpose of supporting that aching head;—to see all this,—feel all this,—was it not positive, life-grinding misery: Alan could the less endure the observation of this distress, because his own funds were so wasted, that he could barely defray the expenses of the inquiry going on in India, and had not one guinea laid by for future bequeathment. Under such impression, he abstained from frequent visits to the moorland. He went to it at length, after two months absence.

Jeannie was in a manner alone; for the cotter and his wife were out, and Mrs. Cameron sleeping off the effects of a strong opiate, taken to lull racking pain. She sat spinning by a dull fire, while her little girl read to her, in a suppressed voice, a chapter from the Bible. Traces of tears were on the young mother's cheeks; and her eyes, shaded only by the widow's cap, (her glossy hair never appearing now,) were surcharged with thoughts, suggested by her mother-in-law's recent suffering. Alan paused a moment on the clay threshold, before he could master the heart-throb with which he contemplated that sadly fixed brow, which grief had robbed of all life-tints. As he advanced, Jeannie's glad welcome was interrupted by the shock of seeing him look ill, evidently from positive illness. Upon questioning

him, she found that he had imprudently sat in wet clothes at a public meeting, after having been previously overheated, and in consequence had been laid up with an inflammation of the lungs. Some fever and a hollow cough remained, which, though Alan made light of it, reminded her who heard it that two of his mother's brothers had fallen victims to consumption; and she looked at him for a single instant with a piercing and grieving kindness, which she had never before suffered her eyes to express. Alan turned like ashes at the look, but only pressed the little Janet to his breast, as she came lovingly between his knees. There was no joy in the thrill of that submissive breast; yet was there tenderness in it. He was beginning to speak, but a fit of severe coughing seized him, and after several ineffectual efforts, he was obliged to relinquish the attempt.

The fond child pressed his now flushed cheeks with both her small hands; kissing those cheeks alternately; calling him her "dear gude Alan," and begging him never to stay away so long again. Alan almost hugged the sweet innocent into his heart. "Oh, what would I gi'e," he exclaimed involuntarily, "that my puir father had na' tied up my hands sae! My bonny bairn!—ane blink o' ye're gladsome e'e is aye my heart's cordial!—But I'm na' the liker to dee for a' this, Mrs. Cameron," he added, seeing Jeannie regarding him with pitying expression; "a gude day's wark, or twa, will rouse me up again."

"Dinna talk o' wark, Mr. Forsyth," said Jeannie, with a heavy sigh; "ye're fitter far for your bed, and a nurse by ye; and dinna fash yersel' about us, but tak care o' ye're ain life. My puir heart's sair to see ye. Ye're owre gude to be let out o' this sorrowfu' warld; and be gane—". Jeannie's voice sunk in tears at this faint allusion to her husband, and it was some time before she recovered herself.

After brief silence, she dried her eyes, and looked at him again, long and steadfastly; then laying her hand on his arm, said, in a tone of earnest interest, "Alan, friend! never man has been truer friend than ye hae been to me; and noo that I never mair shall see him wha only had the right to direct, nane but God an' my ain conscience to speir at, gif ye'll get some doome body intil ye're house to mind that cough, ye shall tak' ye're wee wifey hame wi' ye, to pleasure ye, whiles ye idle a bit. My puir mither, sleepin' there, is na' fit for ony thing, or she wad watch by ye day

an' night, to testify our gratitude an' regard; but she tak's sair nursing hersel', Alan; we must na' lose ye too."

At the accents of Jeannie's voice, Alan's heart again melted with a sad joy; and as he laid his gushing eyes upon the head of little Janet, conflicting emotions shook his whole body.

When at length he could trust himself with speech, he answered cheerfully, that he was not ill enough yet, to rob her of her darling; owned it was a sore temptation to offer him his "wee wifey," but said he was not so selfish as to take her to a lone man's house; he should therefore thankfully decline the kind proffer, and come again soon, to recompense himself, and show his friends that he was far stouter than they thought.

"But I am somewhat distressed in mind, Mrs. Cameron," he added, hesitatingly, "and ye ken, that when we hae ony thing unpleasing to say to a body, we—"

"Eh! what hae ye been hearing?" Jeannie exclaimed, with instant apprehension. Alan unwillingly handed her an open letter. She read it in eager silence.

The letter purported, that John Henderson could not be traced. It was discovered that he had left the coasting ship, into which he had transferred himself at Bombay: but whether he had taken a situation in some American or some European vessel, and quitted India, no one could tell. It was possible that he was dead.

Without this man's testimony, the draught of Captain Macdowall's will would not be admitted as a legal instrument, and Jeannie's family must remain in beggary. After she had twice read this letter, Jeannie did not weep—did not utter sigh or sound; she sat perfectly still, while Alan was falteringly trying to say something consolatory; but there was an expression in her tearless eyes, as they rested on the paper, which rung poor Alan's heart.

"O, Jeannie!" he said, tremulously, "what wad I gi'e—O that ye could read my heart, whiles—" He broke off, and tried to look away from her, as she now locked both her hands over her eyes, and sat motionless as a statue; but his asking gaze returned to her again, and he ejaculated a few inaudible words. Jeannie at length broke her dreary silence.—"Alan—kind friend," she said, "ye dinna judge hardly o' me for this; I weil ken the sin o't, and I pray whiles for mair grace. But my Malcolm in the salt sea—"

my bairns like to be beggars,—and ye, perhaps, na in this world when I may be ta'en out o't—O Alan, but for my bairns, and yon puir body sleepin' there—” Jeannie's voice melted, and suffocated in tears. Alan looked at her, fetched two or three short agitated sighs, looked wistfully at her again—then with hurried accents, said, “ My father, rest his saul, meant weel ; but O, that he had na' made sic a hard dispose o' his property !—ye ken, that I may na' bequeath ony o' his siller to ony body, except a wife o' my ain ; and the little siller I hae scrapit up, is a' gane too—so, if I dee soon—Jeannie—I ken ye' re heart is in the salt sea ; but if—”

Jeannie started up, her face crimsoned. “ Dinna name it, Alan ! dinna name it ! ” she cried forcibly ; then turning white as a corpse, tried to catch at something near her for support, but sunk down with a suffocating sigh on the seat whence she had risen.

Alan dropped on his knees before her. “ Jeannie, I tak' God to witness, it was na' for my ain sake I hae made sae bauld ;—do ye believe me, Jeannie ?—fond and sinfu' my heart is, doubtless ; but it's owre much yours to desire ony thing ye dinna like. I was but thinking o' ye're destitute state, when ye might hae nane to help ye, an' me in the kirkyard—an' I thought if I could ony how bequeath—”

Alan stopped ; his eyes, earnestly, humbly, fondly fixed on her, he began again. “ O Jeannie, if for the bonnie weans' sake ! I'd never claim ony thing o' ye save ye're sweet company ;—naething but the pleasure o' leaving a' my worldly wealth to ye.” Again he paused ; but Jeannie could not answer ; her tears were pouring like heavy rain, and sobs shook her delicate frame nearly to convulsion.

Once or twice she motioned him to rise, though without looking up ; but Alan refused to quit his kneeling posture, till she should utter his pardon, and say she believed his disinterested motive.

“ Kind Alan ! I believe ye ! ” at length she faltered out, as Mrs. Cameron, awakened by the sound of hysteric weeping, called from her bed in a voice of alarm. Jeannie caught up her terrified little girl in her arms, and leaving Alan to explain the scene, hurried from their small room, into that only other one, appropriated to the cotter and his wife.

Alan was gone, when Jeannie rejoined her mother-in-law ;

but she had heard his frequent and hollow cough breaking in upon the mournful murmur of his voice, while speaking, sounding to her ears his own death knell ; and she felt her ingratitude, as she sickened to remember all she owed to him.

But her heart was indeed at the bottom of the salt sea, with the husband of her youth ; and she refused, at this moment of strongly-awakened love, to look on the future beggary of her children.

“No—never could she give herself to any man, after having belonged to Malcolm.” Rather could she see her babes perish in her arms, herself perishing with them, than give them another father!

There was, however, a probability more grievous than dying all together, which Jeannie would not imagine then, but which Mrs. Cameron’s better-disciplined mind, steadily, because unavoidably, contemplated ; and, after a time, pressed firmly upon her daughter-in-law’s consideration.

In consequence of bodily fatigue, scanty food, scantier clothing, and increasing years, Mrs. Cameron’s originally shattered constitution was evidently quite broken. It was probable that she would not live ; or if living, must remain a dead weight upon others. Jeannie’s own delicately-constructed frame was wasting away, under premature anxiety, and unwonted toil. If they both died, (supposing Alan Forsyth taken away,) who was to succour Cameron’s orphans ?—and, even if both parents lived, would it not be to behold these beloved memorials of him they mourned, doomed to hopeless penury ?—Jeannie had attempted much, done much for their maintenance, but misfortunes accumulated ; and here was Alan Forsyth, to whom she owed almost every comfort they had tasted, willing to make her children rich and happy ; generously offering to take the boon of her hand upon her own terms. Alan, too, was sick and sad, without wife or kinswoman to wait on his sickness,—and Alan was their benefactor !

Mrs. Cameron did not urge all this in one conversation : she dealt more mercifully with Jeannie, and with her own inward bleeding heart. But she noticed the best moments for introducing the vital subject, and pressed it occasionally with as much tenderness as good sense. Jeannie could no longer help thinking over the late past, and the dismal future. The one contemplation excited gratitude and pity

towards Alan Forsyth; the other awakened anguish and apprehension for her children.

Winter was coming on; Mrs. Cameron's rheumatic complaint was fixing into actual helplessness; gainful work, as well as strength, was failing Jeannie; small debts were accumulating by her; Alan Forsyth kept fearfully away; and there were times when her poor children had not bread to eat.

There was "neither meal nor money" in their poor tenement, one night, when Mrs. Cameron again ventured on the painful subject. Jeannie sat silently at her wheel; big tears dropt fast and frequent over her cheeks; and though she felt the fingers of her little Ronald in the plaits of her gown behind, as he moaned whisperingly that he was very hungry, she moved not—spoke not. Tears, scalding tears alone, continued running down her faded face, dropping on the hair of little Janet, who sat winding yarn at her mother's feet, piteously regarding her grandmother's old and half-famished cat, as it pressed itself into her skirts for the sake of warmth.

Mrs. Cameron felt every one of her own words, as she uttered them, go to her heart like a knife; but she believed that the bitter sacrifice was demanded of her as of Jeannie, for her son's children's sake; and, with many an anguished glance at the misery of Jeannie's look, she went on with her melancholy exposition of their desperate circumstances.

Mrs. Cameron finished her exhortation by the assurance, that she thought if Malcolm's blessed spirit were permitted to speak to those on earth, it would bid his wife accept the generous offer of their friend and benefactor.

With this declaration she ended. Deep silence followed. Little Ronald continued pulling his mother's gown; but Jeannie still noticed it not. Her features, however, began to move convulsively; large drops gathered on her forehead; the child gradually slackened his hold, till sinking down, as if utterly hopeless, he burst into audible tears.

Jeannie, with a smothered, dismal sound, as if her very heart-strings cracked, pushed away her wheel, and snatching up the child, exclaimed, "Mither! I'll marry Alan!" As she concluded, her head fell over that of her fatherless boy, while pressing him to her bosom with one hand, and drawing the piteous-looking Janet into the same embrace.

From her attitude and her stillness it might be supposed

she had fainted ; but Mrs. Cameron better understood this death-trance of a sore-wrung heart ; and she suffered the poor victim's head to rest upon those of her children, till the last throe was over, and softened feelings flowed out in different tears.

Jeannie once more wept long and violently ; Mrs. Cameron shared her sad emotion ; but, after some time, she controlled herself sufficiently for speech, tenderly reverting to Alan Forsyth's generous and moderate expectations from an union with the widow of Malcolm.

Jeannie lifted up her pale face as she spoke. "Na', mither," she cried, "ance I marry Alan, I'll do a wife's duty till him. Gif I am to tak' my bairns' bread an' breeding fra' his kind hand, I'll na' show mysel' ungratefu'. Let the weans bide wi' ye a bit," she added rising ; "I want to be by mysel'."

There is no privacy for the poor ; in that grievance only they resemble the highest rich : their griefs, their joys, nay, their very prayers, are obliged to pass in public. Jeannie Cameron was forced to quit her single room, ere she might beat her breast unseen and uncensured.

She hurried from the low door-way. It was a clear October night, and before her stretched the desolate moorland—above her spread the splendid heavens. The sky was spangled thickly with stars, and directly opposite to her burnt that one fixed light which her lost husband had first taught her how to know and to find.

That star seemed reproaching her now for what she had just purposed. She closed her eyes hastily against its brightness ; then pressing her lips on the ring he had given her, exclaimed, "O my drowned Malcolm ! it is for ye're bairns that I pay sic bitter price. Rather wad I row me in my winding sheet—" Jeannie's shuddering heart shrunk from its own imagining ; and again she wildly kissed the ring which Malcolm's hand had placed upon hers.

Back on her memory came all the hope, the dread, the tumult, the thrilling transports of that blissful period. She remembered every look, every tone of her lover's ; she remembered, too, her own superstitious seizure when he told her that the original possessor of that ring was a heart-stricken man in the grave ; and she thought now that such sad foreboding had been verified.

Not until she had thrown herself upon her knees on the

bare earth, and prayed fervently to that God in whose bosom she humbly trusted her husband was resting, did peace revisit her tortured thoughts. With prayer came a strong sense of duty, of needful chastisement, of an overruling and divine will, which she feared to resist; and when she arose from her knees, she arose resigned and strengthened.

Jeannie re-entered the cotter's hovel with the look of a submitted spirit. Mrs. Cameron also had had her agony; but it, too, was over; and, by tacit consent, neither of them renewed the agitating subject for that night. The next day a letter was despatched from Mrs. Cameron to the Brae Farm.

Scarcely crediting his senses, with death on his cheek, but transport at his heart, Alan Forsyth speeded to the cotter's hovel. In Jeannie's consent to become his wedded wife, every wish of his youth and manhood were included. Jeannie consented to dwell under the same roof with him—to watch his wasting frame till it should moulder into the grave—to owe to him a home and provision for all she loved on earth! Alan's soul was content.

How they met, and what was spoken between them, it would be vain to describe. There was deep sorrow and deep joy in the meeting. But Jeannie had more to constrain on her side, since with her was the sorrow, a sorrow all her own; and with Alan was the joy, a joy so free from base selfishness, so pure, so generous, so exalted by inward consciousness of life's decay, that it needed no concealment.

Little discussion was necessary. Alan had already executed the deed, which bequeathed every thing he possessed to Jeannie; as soon as she would fix the day, he would make preparations for their marriage.

A day was named: Jeannie was to remain till then in her present humble abode; after which, Alan was to take them all home to the Brae Farm; there, Mrs. Cameron kindly hoped her cares, and those of his grateful wife, would conquer the fatal symptoms of disease which now burnt upon his cheek; and Jeannie, scarcely knowing what she felt, except that it was wretchedness of some sort, inwardly purposed, that, with Heaven's assistance, she would perform a wife's duty by him to the last.

During the week which intervened between this day, and the one appointed for their marriage, Jeannie bore her-



self with an exterior of decent cheerfulness : if she wept through many a lonely moment in byre or field, she dried her eyes before she came into the presence of her mother, and her children. These last loved Alan Forsyth even now, as though he were their father ; she would not, therefore, let them see, that to marry him, was a new sorrow to her.

The marriage day came ; " druckit an' drearie," as the old cotter called it, while he looked up at the dark raining sky. Jeannie stood before the altar with Alan Forsyth, the companion of her childhood, her friend, her benefactor. But him she saw not there : she saw only the vision of her first marriage-day ; she was conscious only to the voice that had then sounded angel-like in her ear—to the hand that had then thrilled her very soul. Malcolm, in all the young beauty and joyous love of that sunny day, stood again before her : she was entranced for a moment ; then, with such a look as we awaken with from a blessed dream of startling reality, gazed up at the sound of her present bridegroom's stifling cough, and met such a look of tender sympathy from his eye, that it smote her to the heart. She recovered herself on the instant, and the marriage rite was finished. Here too, ended Jeannie's sacrifices :—nothing further was demanded of her.

On reaching the Brne Farm, they found a letter waiting them from the law-agent in Edinburgh, announcing the welcome surprise of John Henderson's appearance, and the now certain settlement of little Ronald's claim.

Had this letter only arrived one day sooner, Jeannie need not have married Alan. This the latter felt ; and in the bitterness of his regret for her sake, and fearing that she would now look on him less kindly, gave way to a degree of agitating emotion unusual to him. Jeannie earnestly assured him, that, after having once consented to become his wife, no change of fortune would have made her voluntarily renounce the engagement. She said this with so much tenderness, recapitulating all her obligations to him at the same time, that Alan's desponding feeling yielded before one of gratified affection. His weakened frame, however, was unable to support the conflict of pain and pleasure, and the bursting of a small blood-vessel was the immediate consequence.

Confusion and alarm now succeeded to Jeannie's causes

for thankfulness. Medical advice was summoned, and after much agonizing anxiety, the worst symptoms were relieved, and instant danger removed. Jeannie's first act of wedded affection, was that of watching by her husband's bed all that long and tearful night. And for many successive days and nights did she perform the same sad duty.

Was Alan to be pitied then? O no.—Never had he known such happiness. Jeannie's down-like step was always hovering near him; Jeannie's kind eye was always upon him; Jeannie's kinder voice was perpetually in his ear. She was watching by him, ministering to him, thinking of him, praying for him. Her children hung round his neck, caressing and blessing him. What could he ask more?

Even sickness has its sources of fervent enjoyment; there is no place like the sick-chamber for proving the worth and the affection of those whom we delight to gild with every sensibility, and to gift with every virtue. Alan never loved Jeannie so fondly, so rapturously, yet so holily, as he did now, when conscious that he must soon pass away from her, like a tale that is told.

Even Malcolm Cameron, could he have seen his wife supporting the poor invalid's head, as he sat exhausted after paroxysms of coughing,—even he, would not have plucked him from the soft resting-place his aching temples found. Faithful to his own engagement, Alan leaned on Jeannie but as a blest and grateful brother. Whilst the grasp of death was on him, he beheld her with the eyes of a dying man; it was only in such moments as now and then flatter the consumptive with a hope of future health, that he sometimes dwelt on the fond hope of living to win her entirely to himself, by a long course of generous self-denying love.

After a fortnight's confinement to his bed, Alan again got down among his friends and family. At first he appeared only for an hour or two in the evening, when the house was all warm and shut up, and the over-exciting children gone to rest: then he came earlier; till by degrees he established himself by the parlour-fire, for the whole of each day.

Meanwhile, every thing within and without doors, went on well under Jeannie's careful direction. On all occasions she endeavoured to repay Alan Forsyth's humble devotedness, by unremitting attention to his welfare and interests. Freely did she give him the joy of seeing that his generosity had indeed sweetened her existence. She taught her

children to love and honour him; and by the solicitude with which she ministered to his slightest wants, and watched his melancholy decay, convinced him that Jeannie would at last lament him for her own sake.

There were indeed so many substantial blessings afforded her now, that she must have been criminal alike to Providence and to Alan, had she not felt and devoutly acknowledged their existence.

Money and comforts flowed in upon her. The important suit was decided, and little Ronald was now master of two thousand pounds, herself enjoying the interest of that sum. Mrs. Cameron warmly clad, generously dieted, and kindly attended, was rapidly recovering her usefulness. Penury and privations, toil, and the bitter inability to relieve another's wants, which had so long afflicted Jeannie, were now over; and her children's faces, so lately wan with poverty, were as bright with colour as with smiles.

At their gleeful sports, and bursts of innocent mirth, (sounds hitherto unheard,) the mother's heart would fill with transport; though, perhaps, the next moment, that heart would be shadowed by thoughts of him who would have joyed with her had he heard such sounds. Jeannie had been Alan Forsyth's wife two months, and with the last days of December a second winter seemed to be setting in, when Alan's physician, who, coming from a distance, only came occasionally, found him so reduced by sleeplessness and night-perspirations, that he considerably warned the family to prepare for his speedy, though gentle, dissolution. Sincere was the grief which wrung Jeannie's heart at this intimation; Alan was very dear to her; and to her children he was indeed a second father. She now recollected every trifling, as well as great kindness he had ever shown to her, and recollected them with bitter self-upbraidings. How affectionately he had borne himself towards her husband's mother; how willingly he had taken the charge of her Malcolm's dog and of her parrot, when, on quitting Dundee, she no longer had means to keep them; and when auld Bawtie died, did na' Alan see the puir tyke laid decent in the ground, for his drowned master's sake?" Jeannie's soft heart melted over these remembrances.

Alan himself was serenely resigned to his inevitable fate; for the utmost wishes of his pure passion had been gratified,

when the marriage rite empowered him to place Jeannie beyond the reach of pecuniary care.

After the physician's departure, and a sad discussion of what he had imparted, Alan had a portion of Scripture read to him by her whose voice was still his soul's music ; after which he went to sleep in his easy-chair.

For the sake of warmth (though it was only the gloaming) the window-shutters were closed, leaving the room merely enlightened by the glow of a good peat fire. As Alan slept, Mrs. Cameron went on silently preparing some whey against his waking ; while Jeannie sat knitting by his side, watching his slumbers with anxious observation. Her heart was more than usually heavy ; for on this day she had heard his death-doom ; and this day was the birthday of her drowned Malcolm.

Poor blind fools that we are ! In this awful state of never-ceasing change, why do we ever set apart certain days for joy and festival ! The time comes surely to us all, when such days return burthened thus, with a double load of sorrow. Jeannie could not drive back from her thoughts the memory of past 30ths of December ; and well did she read on his mother's pale cheek the same sad remembering.

But neither of them noticed each other's silent suffering.

The most perfect stillness, however, reigned in the little parlour, when the voice of the servant girl in the outer room was heard addressing Mrs. Cameron's cat. "Awa wi ye, auld Pouldy ; get up fra' the fire, ye muckle whaup !" At the same time another sound was heard, as of some one entering, and shaking the weather off their clothes and their feet.

"Is that the dear bairns come fra' the catechising ?" asked Alan, as he awaked.

"Its na' the bairns !" was called out from the kitchen, by the stout lass officiating there. A moment or two afterwards, her broad good-humoured face was seen at the door ; she was come for some whisky.

"Wha ha' ye got there, Katie ?" asked Mrs. Cameron, as she gave out the cordial.

"Ainly a puir auld body, wi' his very heart gripped wi' the cauld ; I found him out by the byre, standin' glowrin' at the house like ane stupefied. Troth, he was amaist smoor-ed wi' the sna'."

"Wi' the sna' !" repeated Jeannie, seized with a mo-

ther's panic. "Does it sna' then sae?" and without waiting an answer, she ran into the kitchen: never stopping to notice the poor wayfarer, who, in attempting to rise from a stool before the fire, had tottered and sank down again, she pushed open the outer door, and looked out.

The knowe before the house, and the burn running past it, were already sheeted with "the white deluge," which still continued to come heavily down; and the fall itself was so thick, that none but the nearest objects could be discerned through it.

Jeannie's brain immediately filled with fearful images. Between the Brae Farm and the minister's house, where her children were, there lay many broken banks, and a very deep small stream, which the treacherous snow might conceal and render dangerous. "God guide us, what a night it will be!" she exclaimed.

Katie hastened to relieve a mother's fear. "Hoot, mistress!" she cried with rough kindness, "there's naething to flay ye. The bairns 'll come skelpin' in, just noo, ye'll see. Baith Bell an' Donald are awa' for them; an' in the shay-cart too."

"Weel! Weel!" repeated the silenced mother; "Katie, see ye let that puir auld man bide till the fa's oure; or may be he'll be for sleepin' in the byre wi' some gude blankets happed about him. Gude friend!"

"Ye need na' fash yeresel' to speer at him," Katie observed. "At first I thought he was either daft or deaf, for he ainly wagged his pow, an' worked wi' his puir, durty hands: but I'm thinking noo, that he's outlandish by the bit duds o' him, an' a word or twa o' gibberish he was stottering whiles."

See till him then, Katie," said Jeannie, moving away sadly; "I'm owre wae just noo to mind onything mysel'!" and with a sore sigh she returned heavily into the parlour.

The next moment the rumbling of a cart was heard through the snow, close to the house. Katie called joyously out, Jeannie ran back, and in another second, the glad clamour o' young voices, and of eager kissing, were mixed with a mother's thanksgivings.

Alan rose from his chair without assistance, and tottered into the midst of them. A seat was directly placed under him by his gently-chiding Jeannie, while Katie poured out

the children's supper of porridge, and Mrs. Cameron dried their little faces, which not even Donald's thick plaid had defended completely from the weather.

After many a fondly renewed clasp round the neck of the delighted Alan, and as many a silent, agitated embrace from their full-hearted mother, Janet and little Ronald began to eat their suppers, relating between each horn-spoon full, with childish eagerness, their wonderful triumphs at the catechising.

To them the drifting snow, which had caused their mother's alarm, had been actual enjoyment. The huddling all together under one plaid, the stumbling speed of their clumsy horse, nay, the very melting of the cold snow-flakes on their little cheeks, was to them amusement; and while they told of these, their brightened faces announced both health and glee.

Jeannie's spirits were depressed beyond her power of rousing; and, for once, something like a pang pierced her as she contrasted their happy unconcern on this sadly-remembered day with her own wretched remembrances: yet, for Alan's sake, she had not said what day it was. She turned aside to conceal her emotion, sighing (perhaps unconsciously as she had used to do when alone, and self-privileged to sigh).

At that sound her parrot, suddenly ceasing to scream on the names of her children, mechanically finished the sigh with the words which used ever to follow it, "O, my Malcolm!" At that unexpected, long-forbidden exclamation, Jeannie's weakened spirit at once abandoned her, and sinking down on the bench beside Alan, she burst into agonizing tears.

Alan looked anxiously, piteously on her; then laid his trembling hand on her knee, and as she tried to suffocate her tears while sobbing "Forgi' me," Alan faltered out, "Dinna stop ye'resel, my Jeannie. I ken ye'll greet whiles for Malcolm a' ye're days; I loo' ye the better for it. Mrs. Cameron," he resumed, after a short pause, "the bairns ha' done—will ye see them in bed to-night?"

Mrs. Cameron understanding him, motioned to their maid Bell, and taking a hand of each sorrow-taught and now-tearful child, she went quietly away with them.

Jeannie's long-suppressed feelings had over-mastered her completely, and she suffered the children to be removed, and

her husband to remain, without attempting to interfere. With natural good-feeling, Katie bustled into the parlour upon what she would have called "a theeveless errand," having, by a previous glance, ascertained that the old beggar had fallen with his head against the wall, evidently fast asleep.

Thus, in a manner, alone with his wife, Alan addressed her with soothing tenderness. For some time Jeannie could only press and wring the hand which feebly clasped hers. At length she sobbed out,

"It is this day, Alan! this ance happy day! O, forgi' me, forgi' me! Ye that ha' been a true father to my Malcolm's bairns, and I na'-wife to ye! Little comfort will ye ha' had wi' me, Alan, freend!"

"Say na' sae, my dawted ane!" replied the fond Alan, resting his cheek on her shoulder, as he feebly drew her towards him. "Does na' my head lay noo where I never thought it wad ha' laid? A deeing man, Jeannie, is na' like ane in health; he has na' wish or thought but what he may carry into anither warld wi' him. Sae noo, believe me, I'm just gretesu' that I never asked mair o' ye."

"An' ye, too, to be taken awa'!" exclaimed Jeannie, pursuing her own sad thoughts. "Waes me! what a sorrowfu' life is mine! Ance it was sae happy—owre happy! Blithe shall I be to lay it down, whenever it pleases God."

"Dinna say that, my Jeannie," interrupted Alan, breathing shorter and fainter; "that's a bit sinfu'. Think that ye ha' got ye're husband's gude-mither still, and ye're bonnie bairns, that will grow up blessings to ye, na' doubt."

"Oh yes! if I were na sinfu'," Jeannie repentingly answered, "I wad na' be sae heart-sair. Ye ken if I could ha' conquered my wicked will, and been in a' things sic a wife to ye as I was to my drowned Malcolm, I should na' be sae wae noo. But ye're faint, Alan—ye're owre weary;" and she started from her seat with another compunctious pang.

Alan's pale face flushed for a moment—he gasped to recover breath; then rising slowly, too, on her supporting arm, owned himself exhausted, and expressed a desire of getting to bed.

Jeannie obeyed with apprehensive quickness; and calling on Katie, succeeded, with her help, in getting him back into the parlour, and thence, by slow stages, up stairs.

Having seen the children settled for the night, Mrs. Cameron came down into the parlour, after passing Alan and Jeannie on the narrow staircase.

She saw, by both their pale faces, that their conversation had been affecting, and aware that all agitation was pernicious to the poor invalid, restrained herself from uttering more than a cheerful good night.

She now sat down by the neglected fire, with a mournful foreboding that Alan's sand of life had not many grains to run; and as the memory of his various generous acts pressed upon her grateful heart, ejaculated a fervent prayer for his support and acceptance in the awful hour which seemed so near him.

Some dark object suddenly interposing between her and the light which entered at the open door from the kitchen, caused Mrs. Cameron to look up. She started at sight of a man's figure. A second glance assured her that it was the foreign wayfarer whom Katie had brought in from the snow. She knew him by his torn gaberdine, large beard, and strange head-covering of rolled linen.

As this man had cowered over the fire while the children supped, he had appeared low and decrepid; but now he stood tall and erect. Still she did not see his face distinctly; for the lower part of it was wholly concealed by a dark growth of beard, and the upper part was hid by his turban and the action of looking forward.

"Do ye want onything, freend?" she asked, with some trepidation, aware that Donald was busy out of doors.

The stranger did not answer. He gazed wildly before him, drew his breath hard, threw a more hurrying glance all round; then stepping close up to her, laid a trembling hand on her arm. Still he did not speak; but there was something in the feel of that hand—something in that hard, quick breathing! Mrs. Cameron wildly grasped the arm on hers. "In the name of God!" she cried—she could not utter more—the next moment she was pressed to the heart of her son! She heard his voice in her ear, felt his kiss on her cheek, and knew he lived! Long, and silent, and bitter may be called their joy. Malcolm only spoke by frequent, wringing sighs, and convulsed pressures: his mother murmured thanksgivings and prayers almost wanderingly. "I live to see ye, my son," she said at last, as pushing off the



shawl from his head, she gazed sadly on his still white brow and tear-red eyes.

"Ah, ye see me, my mither!" he said in a voice of despair; "But hoo do ye see me?—a ruined an' bereaved man. My Jeannie anither's! I dinna blame her. But life's owre wi' me, mither. Ye must just get me to ane kiss o' my bonnie bairns, noo I've had yours, and then I'll gae wander—I care na' where I wander."

"What for wad ye gae, Malcolm?" cried his mother, catching at his hands, to stop their wild action. "Dinna ye see that puir Alan is na' for this warld, and that Jeannie's heart is as true to ye noo as the day ye married her? Did na' ye hear her in the kitchen there greetin' for ye?"

"That kitchen!" Malcolm repeated; "'a' that I suffered in Barbary was nathing to what I ha' suffered but noo in that kitchen."

"Did na' ye hear her greetin' for ye, Malcolm! persisted Mrs. Cameron; "ye were na' sleepin' sure?"

"Yes, I heard her," Malcolm answered, something like joy lighting his shaded eyes; "but O, mither, that anely mak's me mair sure that she wad never be mine again, even if puir Alan were cauld. Ance anither man's—na', she'd dee first!—an' I think I wad. That is na' her step, is it?" he asked, hurrying back his turban; "she must na' see me. I wad na' break her precious heart. She thought me drowned. Ye were a' fren'less—I heard it a' at Dundee. I ken she did it for my bairns—yes, yes, for my bairns!" and as Malcolm spoke, he sat down, unconscious of what he did: and covering his face with both hands, wept audibly.

At this sound, Katie, who had been seeking the supposed mendicant out of doors, now looked in. Mrs. Cameron hastily told her the poor fellow was a relation, and bid her say nothing about it at present. Katie nodded and stared, but retreated.

Aware of what was passing in her son's breast, Mrs. Cameron now hastened to explain to him all those circumstances in Jeannie's peculiar situation with which public report could not have acquainted him, but which were evidently essential to his peace.

She did this briefly, but thoroughly. When she concluded, her son, who had been listening to her with rapidly-changing feelings, threw himself on his knees, and with fervently clasped hands, invoked blessings on the dying bed

of the generous Alan, blessings on the prolonged life of his faithful Jeannie, beseeching God to give himself the grace to be duly thankful for the stunning rapture of the present moment. Ill could he answer his tender mother's questions of how, where he had been saved? whether the Andrew were really wrecked? and where he had been living so many years?

He told her, but briefly, that the ship had actually foundered at the time said; that he saw Captain Macdowal perish, while vainly attempting to help him; that he himself was floated on a plank to the Barbary coast, where he had suffered seven years' captivity; from which he was released by British valour, in the successful expedition of Lord Exmouth's fleet against Algiers. "But, O, mither," he abruptly cried, "dinna mak' me talk o' mysel—o' ony thing noo, except my wife and my bairns. Can na' ye get speech at her, out o' Alan's sleepin'-room?—puir Alan! excellent Alan!—and my wee darlings!—my very saul yearned till them, in yon kitchen. This night, my blessed mither, this night ye must tell Jeannie, or I shall na' be able to live owre it.—Ance in these arms again!—O, mither, what a famished heart has your puir son had, for seven lang years!"

Mrs. Cameron replied by the expressive, though silent clasp of a mother. As she gazed upon her son's all awakened features, disguised though the face was, by the thick beard, and purposed staining, she recognised again the countenance so dear to her memory.

Gratefully anxious not to hurry the feeble spirit of their benefactor, by a sudden discovery of what had just occurred, and as anxious for her daughter-in-law, she besought Malcolm to calm himself, if possible, as Alan's life now hung by a single thread; and Jeannie's agitated heart was little calculated to bear a shock even of joy.

"Bide still my son," she said, while rising to leave him, "and dinna be impatient. I must get Jeannie out o' the sick-room, and Alan must be sleepin' too, or I may na' venture on telling her.—Mind, if ye see Jeannie come down to ye her lane, be sure she kens wha she is to see." Malcolm answered by the short, trembling sigh of impatient happiness, and his mother disappeared.

What a beating heart was his!—Now he walked up and down the little room; now he stopped, hearkening for Jeannie's step; then he walked to and fro again; sometimes

pausing to gaze on articles of furniture associated with the dearest remembrances, sometimes standing opposite the ticking clock, to see if the dial-hands actually moved. Exclamations of pious gratitude, of unworthiness in himself for so many mercies, of enthusiastic admiration of Alan Forsyth, of tenderness for his wife and children, burst at intervals from his lips.

At length a light sound was heard on the stairs. Malcolm abruptly sat down, for his limbs could no longer bear him up. Some one, he saw, flew in, but he saw not whom: some one tried to reach him with their outstretched arms, but only his heart felt the embrace: his arms locked the fainting figure round; one gasp from each, at the same moment, and husband and wife fell together, senseless, on the floor.

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The next day, after Alan had been made acquainted with the surprising event of the preceding night, and his first strong emotion of amazement and joy sufficiently tranquilized, he called for Malcolm and Jeannie.

Will it be wondered at, that the husband and father, as he dropt on his knees to kiss the generous hand which had given bread to his children, and preserved his wife like a sacred deposit; is it to be wondered at, that he should weep like a child, and utter expressions of idolatrous gratitude?

Alan was nearly overcome with honouring emotion, at the sight of him kneeling by his side; and at the touch of Jeannie's kiss, as she sealed her lips for the first time in her life upon his pale forehead.

"Dinna worship me, Malcolm, freend!" he faintly exclaimed.—"Gi' thanks where alane they are, due. And dinna greet for ye're happy Alan, Jeannie! He's mair blest this very hour, than he was the day ye ga'ed him ye're precious hand.—"Is it na mine still? Aye, Malcolm man," he added, with a sweet and kindly smile, "She's na' ye're wife yet. Ye ken ye were awa' gude seven years; sae ye maun marry her owre again when I'm gane.—Unless she were my lawfa' wife, I could na' ha' bequeathed her a' my worldly goods.—I see ye dinna begrudge her blessed watchin' by me for the bit days I ha' yet to pass aboon ground."

Cameron sobbed out some inarticulate words of sorrow and affection. Alan spoke again ; " Cameron, humbly do I tak' God to witness, that I ha' ever lo'ed ye're Jeannie's saul far better than her face, sweet and bonnie as 'it is,—and lo'ed her happiness far mair than my ain weel wishes. Sae noo I'll dee content ; for she has got ye, an' happiness baith : an' puir Alan will live in a' ye're hearts, lang, lang after a cauld stane's laid owre him, i' the kirk-yard.—And ye'll be bringing my wee wisey, noo an' then, to that cauld stane," he resumed, seeing those around him were weeping too much for speech—" an' ye'll tell her, that there lies the mortal part o' ane wha lo'ed her wi' mair than a parent's love—indeed I think it's mair ; ane wha dee'd in the firm confidence o' a blessed rising on that day, when her sweet saul, an' yours, Malcolm, an' yours, Jeannie—and the sauls o' a' I love an' leave, will be given back to me again ; provided I ha' na' forfeited sic grace by my sins."

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Under a plainly inscribed stone, in the kirk-yard, where his parents were buried, lies now the body of the generous Alan. To that stone often do the re-wedded Malcolm and Jeannie come, in the stillness of evening, with their children, to talk with them of him who lies sleeping below : teaching them so, to love his memory, and to imitate his virtue.

There, often, at later night, when peace and moonlight are resting on these honoured remains, does the grateful and deeply impressed Malcolm come to give his own heart the solemn lesson which that calm scene teaches ; and Jeannie, stealing after him, silently pours out by his side, her tears, in tender libation, over the friend dearer than a brother—the companion of her childhood—the benefactor of her children !

" For the most loved are they,  
Of whom Fame speaks not with her clarion voice  
In regal halls !—the shades o'erhang their way ;  
The vale, with its deep fountain, is their choice.

And gentle hearts rejoice  
Around their steps !—till silently they'die,  
As a stream shrinks from Summer's burning eye.

“ And the world knows not then,  
Not then, nor ever, what pure thoughts are fled!  
Yet these are they, that on the souls of men  
Come back, when night her folding veil hath spread,  
The long remembered dead!”

Mrs. HEMANS.

## MY CHAMBER,

IN THE OLD HOUSE OF HUNTERCOMBE.

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Oft in the stilly night,  
When slumber's chain hath bound me,  
Soft memory brings the light,  
Of other days around me!      MOORE.

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A widow lady in gray, was the next to take up the narration. She looked grave, and rather distressingly embarrassed, on being told it was her turn to tell a story; pleading, in answer to the general demand, a want of powers similar to those gifted persons, who had just performed their parts in relating, so fluently, a tale from beginning to end.

"I never was able," she said, "to repeat even the shortest anecdote I have heard, without dropping, perhaps, the mainspring of its interest. But if you will allow me to read a little narrative of somewhat older times than our own, which I happen to have with me, and so take that for my share of the evening's entertainment, I shall be favoured by the indulgence."

The whole party declared their ready acquiescence; with the caveat, indeed, of one laughing youth, who ventured to premise a hope, "it was not an extract from his grandmother's medical receipt-book, which he knew his Lady Bountiful Aunt was in the custom of conveying about her person, as one of its heir-looms!" Smiling, she shook her head at her saucy nephew; and, while undrawing the strings of a large velvet reticule, out of which she had been knitting, answered, with her recovered easy composure:—"What I have to produce is the heir-loom of some other family, which it may be my fancy to carry about me in my work-bag, as others may do the miniature of a friend! So let that be as it proves. It fell into my hands, a few years ago, when on a visit to some very dear friends, at a fine old house they

then rented, in the neighbourhood of Windsor. The place is called Huntercombe. Its thick stone walls once composed part of the ancient priory of Burnham; having been the residence-quarter of the prioress, or reverend mother, as those times styled her, of the pious sisters of the order of Saint Magdalen of Jerusalem, who then inhabited the conventual cells of the adjacent building. The ruins of Burnham Abbey, for so the country people call it, stands a mile or two off the Windsor high-road; but at no greater distance than across a wide green lane, or sheep-track, they afford a beautiful object from the western windows of the still delightfully habitable mansion of Huntercombe. Part of the roofless nave of the little chapel, with its mouldering tracery window, and some broken arches of the cloisters, all now overgrown with stonecrop and ivy, shoot up from among the old trees there, and of moonlight nights, their gray, dark-hooded pinnacles look like the silent ghosts of other times."

The widow lady paused a moment; and nobody making a remark, to remind her that she was talking a story, instead of reading one, her constitutional timidity still kept quietly lulled asleep; while, with her head full of teeming, tender memories, she drew from her work-bag, something of the size and shape of a small book; but safely locked in a black velvet case, under a silver clasp in the form of a cross, bedded in one of ruby red enamel. The owner did not immediately open it, but with her finger on the key, resumed

"I passed many happy days, and gay hearted evenings, in the large, almost baronial apartment, that looked out on those silent aisles. I have listened there to the harp of one lovely friend; and the voice of another, who, with a perfection many yet remember, sang more exquisitely, than—her family, and the stars her only audience—than when admiring crowds, in a London drawing-room, hung enraptured on her strains. Her hand planned this case; and, with what smiles and sportive raillery on my passion for the nature of the deposit, did she put its contents there!—But she is now, where the author of the record, is also; happy, unceasingly! and her beauty, which dropt here, into the grave in its bloom, there knows no withering!—Sweetest, sweetest Evelynna!"

The widow lady paused again. Her eyes were glistening; and, at the moment, she appeared to have forgotten she was in the presence of aught but her tender recollections,

and the little memorial that recalled them. After a gentle hem or two, and covering the little case with her spread hand, when, turning her eyes from it, she recommenced speaking.

“There were many interesting objects and scenes connected with the original state of Huntercombe, and even of a remoter period, which I have visited or walked over, with those charming girls.—A shattered old avenue of oaks, hoary with moss, and garlanded amidst their decaying branches with full-berried misletoe, led to a large circular embankment which once had been the fish-pond of the convent refectory, for its Lenten days. Now it is dry, and the bottom covered with brambles and rushes. The walk round it had been a broad terrace; but we found it a broken hillock, traversed with overgrowing thicket. Far onward, they took me to what might have well formed a hermit wilderness for the most world-wearied monk;—a glen-like woodland covered with beech and oak, of all shapes and ages. But how can I describe it, to give you an idea of its deep, seemingly bewildering loneliness? and that, only one and twenty miles from London!—One of my companions compared it to the place, where the lady in Comus wandered from her brothers, and met the enchanted crew. But her mother, laughing, yet equally expressively, declared, it reminded her of nothing so much as the wood in Goody ‘Two-Shoes’ story book; where Tom Thumb, with his seven little famishing brothers, were left fast asleep by their poor parents, to find themselves lost when they waked: For my part, I was lost in the images that crowded round me; either of those fancies, or of the forest of Ardennes, with Shakspeare and his Rosalind in the group. But wild and romantic as it is, it boasts no more pretending title in the neighbourhood, than the Burnham beeches. Yet that shows its former affinity with the Abbey; and there, perhaps some of the dark dells, now lying almost impervious beneath the thickly-interlacing arms of the incumbent beech-groves, the site of the chapelage and cells, of the little chapter attached to the convent,—only two holy friars, its priests and confessors, may yet be discovered. One of those green umbrageous ravines, is very deep and wide, therefore more open to the sun, and with less intricate paths leading down into it. There we found a solitary boy, feeding swine on the beech-mast; and, with great simplicity, he told us he had missed part of his herd in the wood, and if we should come up with



them anywhere, he bid us 'holla loud, and he'd be wi' 'em presently.'

"We had not gone very far from him, ere we saw the creatures, quietly nuzzling their repast under a great druid oak, showering down acorna; and with merry peals of laughter from my young companions, the desired sounds were simultaneously given. The little herdsman soon appeared; and seeming an apt boy, while collecting his animals, I asked him a few questions. He told me, the place where we had met him was called Hardy-Canute's trench; but he could give no hearsay reason why it had that name; only stared, when I put the question, and, as if hopeless of understanding me, turned his back, and began gathering up acorns in his hat. It is not, indeed, in England, as we find in Scotland, or Ireland, where every native knows something of the local history around him.—Our country people have hardly any traditions; nor do the gentry either, in general, know much about the past of places and scenes, regarding which they have no present interest. We are, I may say, a nation of constantly-changing properties; and we must go to lands of a perpetuated family heritage, to learn any thing of whose, or what they were, much beyond the existing generations.

"But the mother of my young friends, loved to remember the past, and seek into its memorials; and, after our first mirthful excursion to that fine old wood, on the very same evening, she told me all she had collected respecting the place and its vicinage. Part I have already repeated:—that Burnham Abbey, had been a nunnery; and the dwelling we were in, then its adjunct, the residence of its lady-superior."

The company could have smiled to each other, at the fluent manner in which the gentle widow was herself *telling* all this. But they durst not venture even a side-long glance to each other, with that import; for they well knew, that the moment she felt conscious of "talking away," she would be struck dumb, and they might hear no more even of the MSS. she had promised to read them; so, without rejoinder, save the attentive looks of the party, she proceeded.

"The rest of my friend's information was rather tantalizing. She told me, that a manuscript history of the Abbey, written in monkish Latin by one of the confessors of the convent, had been extant only a few years ago; and that,

after such long preservation in the family, whose ancestors got the place on the subversion of its religious use by Henry VIII., it had been lent to a neighbouring nobleman of noted antiquarian taste. He, it is confidently believed, safely returned it to the owners, at Huntercombe; but, from that hour, it had never been seen, nor even heard of. This account, filling me with regrets for the loss, still more stimulated my curiosity; and one heavy, rainy night—the weather beating against my windows, just as it does now,—I sat musing, after a repetition of these circumstances by my friend; who, that evening, had mentioned some particulars she recollected having been told were in the old record, concerning the characters of the nuns at the time the order was put down by edict:—the very person sent to find reasons for the general subversion, having borne testimony to their unblemished lives; writing to the king that, by way of eminence for their virtues, the sisters of Burnham were universally distinguished from other convents in the neighbourhood, by the name of the *Seven worthy Ladies of Palestine!* Thus meditating, and at that lonely hour of night too, in an apartment at some distance from the sleeping-rooms of the house, for my chamber opened from the large gallery-like drawing-room in the west front;—no wonder I was all eye and ear to the most trifling disturbance of my thoughts! And, in the midst of them, my eye was caught by a glitter on the floor opposite to me, close to the skirt of the oak wainscot. While I looked, the shining spread; and rising up to examine the appearance, on drawing near, for the apartment was a very spacious one I had to cross, I found a stream of water, oozing from under the wainscot; and distinctly heard the sounds of large drops, falling at regular intervals within. Yet they seemed at such a distance from the spot on which I stood, I became assured there must be a chamber of some sort, concealed behind that old wood-work. I struck my hand forcibly against it in several parts, and found the reverberation, for about the space of a doorway, quite hollow; while on each side, the panneling returned the flat sound of a wall immediately behind. I now felt certain of the existence of a room there, unknown to the present inhabitants of the house; and that the rain, making its way through some worn out point of the roof within, had now, most opportunely, revealed the secret. Possessed with this idea, and that probably, here might be closed up

the lost history of the Abbey ! I determined, in the morning, to prevail with my friend to open the wainscot, and explore.

“ At breakfast I told my discovery. The mother, and the whole young group, started from their seats, and ran before me up stairs to examine it. One of the girls, eagerly kneeling down at the crack between the skirting frame and the floor, where the stain of the water now sunk into the boards yet marked the spot, pushed in the long whale-bone handle of a fire-screen, she had snatched from the adjacent mantle-piece, and found an unobstructed passage, as far as it would reach. This seemed such positive proof of some wide recess being within, that one and all of the three sisters, without allowing a moment for the smiling remonstrance of their mother, against breaking down the walls of a house she only rented, to be repeated more gravely to them, continued calling out, “ We must have it opened ! ” I myself heartily backed their outcry ; and proposed instantly summoning one of the footmen, whom they all knew was a very ingenious person ; being confident, he could remove the wainscot, with little or no damage. This was of consequence to my friend’s sense of justice. For the old oak of the priory was not only carved here, but, in its succeeding secular times, had its pannels painted on by Vertot and his pupils, during the intervals of their professional attendance at Windsor Castle. A very beautiful design of Endymion watching his sheep by moonlight, was depicted in this way over the very spot we wished to penetrate. Thomas, the servant who had been called for, suggested taking out no more than the under compartment of the panneling over the supposed door away ; it being without any picture on it, and seeming large enough to allow a person putting in his head at least, to look about. This was assented to by Mrs. —, and done in five minutes after the proposal. I never shall forget the countenances of all present, when the aperture appeared ; and, not only big enough for the workman’s head, but for his whole body, which, with the same eagerness that actuated those who set him on, he immediately thrust through ; and, standing up within, pronounced the place to be a closet of considerable dimensions, with rough stone walls, a table in it, and something on it, he could not well distinguish by the half light, his own person obstructed in its way through the just opened pannel.

“ Oh, let us see ! ” cried every voice at once. Thomas

stepped out at the command ; and while the most agile of the girls instantly took his place, her mother ordered him to hasten for a candle. By the time it was brought, I too had got into the recess ; and the light, which Mrs. — handed in, soon showed us enough, to lead us to pronounce that we then stood in one of the cells of the convent ; and, most probably, the private oratory of the prioress ; for the table-looking piece of furniture our first explorer had announced, must have been used as an altar of devotion ; the indistinct thing on its top, being now discovered to be parts of a crucifix, fallen asunder from the effects of time and damp. On examination, we found it cedar wood, simply carved ; and while putting the fragments forth, to the ready hands without stretched to receive them, my companion in the closet gave a shout of exultation. I turned round, and immediately she held before me a small box,—I thought was,—hanging with cobwebs, and green with mould.

“Here is a book, with metal clasps !” cried she ; “my life for it, the lost history of the Abbey !”

“Whatever it was, she had just taken it out of a little arched cavity close to the devotion-table ; where, thinking she might trace the holy-water basin, usually hollowed in such niches, she had put in her hand, and feeling something moveable, snatched it forth. A glance filled her with the hope she had proclaimed to me. We both stepped instantly into the open light of my chamber, and gave our joint discoveries to the impatient gaze of the rest of the party.

“The outer surface of Evelyn’s treasure, was not a book, but the case of one. The materials proved to be of very thin wood, apparently once overlaid with some rich stuff, but which had all started under the damps of years on years ; a few shreds only, clinging about the rivets of the clasps. These were corroded with rust, and easily gave way under my touch, to which, the good nature of my young friends immediately consigned its examination. The wood of the case, being also cedar, had preserved its contents from the mould, or the worm ; and we drew from it, indeed, a little book ! with its vellum back painted like a missal. The dear girl who had found it, in the height of her youthful spirits danced round us with delight ; stopping at intervals in convulsions of merriment, at the awe-struck sort of silent rapture, with which I stood viewing the discovered treasure.

“ Suffice it to say, that on opening the little volume, we saw it was a manuscript ; illuminated at the head of every page with sacred emblems, and penned in a very small writing. But the language did not look like Latin ; whether Greek or Hebrew, none of us there could form any guess. The dismay of our whetted curiosity, was therefore great among us. However, our fortunate star still ruled.— That same day brought a young Oxonian, the son of my friend, from Oxford, on a pleasant surprise of a week’s visit to his family. He sat down among us, and running his eye over our precious relic, pronounced the language to be really Latin, but in so very old a character, he was not surprised the most learned of its lady investigators had not recognised it. And as to the matter itself, he said, it was certainly not what we expected ; the annals of the Abbot but seemed a private account of the family who had founded it. Which conclusion, drawn from his first hasty and skimming view of the contents was confirmed, by discovering at the top of the title-page, amongst a labyrinthine twist of arabesque blazonry, the following endorsement :

“ Exemplars, gathered from the Confessional of our blessed Patroness, the Lady of Ockhoulst.”

“ ‘ Ockhoulst ! ’ ejaculated his mother. ‘ Well, this is very strange ; for that is the tenure name, our friend Lysons told me, of the old hall on the other side of Maidenhead, now called Oakwells.’ ”

“ Our pleased surprise at this recognition, was almost equal to the delight of having found the MS. itself. But Mrs. —, with something of graver thoughts while leaning over the illuminated page, and following with her eye her son’s pointing out the involved characters of the Anglo-Norman title, rather mournfully exclaimed, ‘ Think, my girls, how places and things change ; as it were, in their very nature ! Into what hands they fall ; how little, after a while, they are considered ! ’ Then turning to her son, she added, ‘ It is hardly a week ago, when, in taking our friend here, to see the note-worthy objects about us, I remembered the old hall of Ockhoulst, or Oakwells, our antiquarian friend had formerly mentioned to me, but which I had forgotten till then. We drove there ; and found that ancient abode, of this very lady-foundress of the house we are in, and of greater personages, too, if the royally-dighted windows tell true, now inhabited by hobnail Hodges, and greasy

Joans ! In fact, farmers of the humbler order. We ran over the place, wondering, indeed, at its striking remains of past grandeur ; but with as careless a thought of who might then have enjoyed it, with all the social delights of life there ; as any who come after us, into our now happy Huntercombe, may have of our existence here !' A tear was in the eye of the fond mother, though she smilingly turned towards her daughters, with the concluding words. Their brother was now excited to visit Ockhoults in his turn ; and the more so, by the descriptions instantly entered into by his sisters, all in a breath indeed, of the curiously-painted glass in the windows. But the mother again interposed, actuated by a look from me, and a glance at the manuscript ; and promised them all another excursion thither, with her son in company, whenever he should have finished the task we had assigned him.

“ The young scholar, however, needed no other exhortation than that of a curiosity, now nearly as great as our own, to stimulate his capability of doing that old monastic Latin into good plain English ; and, evening after evening, he used to bring his translated sheets to his mother's tea-table, and read them aloud, while we, his delightedly attentive audience, variously employed ourselves. Mrs. — always knitted ; Caroline, the eldest of my young friends, as constantly plied her needle in the same cause, for the poor ; and when Thusnelda, the second daughter, was not similarly engaged, she exercised her really fine pencil, in memorandum of the scenes we had visited. As for Evelynna, the life of us all ! whether in frolic or reflection, I cannot say, but from the moment she had heard half-a-dozen pages of the manuscript, she never appeared at a reading, without her beautiful dark hair exhibiting, in honour of the occasion, a bright sprig from a pomegranate-tree, which still spread its vivid green branches, chequered with Tyrian scarlet blossoms, over the southern front of Huntercombe : a lovely witness of the land of its origin ; that, which those mutilated pages, seemed to transport in vision before the hearers. She and I usually leaned on our elbows listening, our needlework quietly resting on our laps, and her eloquent looks, first to one and then another, commenting on the passages, as they varied or deepened their interest. There were gaps in the narrative, by whole leaves in the original having been rent away, why we could form no guess ; however, the story

was not so broken as to dishearten our translator, and he went on. At last the whole was completed; the whole read through. And then Caroline, with her accustomed instant apprehension of what will give most pleasure, copied her brother's rough-cast pages, in a neat, fair hand, on small leaves of vellum paper, to look as like the original MS. as possible; and Thusnelda, with the same kind alacrity, transferring also to this little book, fac-similes of the pictured emblems in the other; the dear Evelyn had it bound; and cased as you see; and all presented it to me;—a treasure, I shall preserve with my life!"

With these words, the widow lady drew the volume she described, out of its velvet cover; and slowly, and pensively unclasping its silver hinges, every body started up to look at it. It was then retaken from their separately admiring hands; the binding being of spotless white, inlaid with a silver-winged dove on one side, and an olive-branch on the other. During the inspection, the interval had given the owner time to recover her former calm placidity of manner; and, opening the little book, in a low, but perfectly clear voice, she read as follows:—

## THE PILGRIMAGE OF BERENICE.

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Hush ! 'tis a holy hour ! the quiet room  
Seems like a temple ; while you soft lamp sheds  
A faint and starry radiance through the gloom,  
And the sweet stillness, down on bright young heads,  
With all their clustering locks untouched by care,  
And bowed, as flowers are bowed by night, in prayer.

Hemans.

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### A RECORD ;

*By the Reverend Mother of the Burnham Cells, of Saint  
Magdalen's at Jerusalem, to the Seven Chantry Sisters  
of our Lady of Ockhoul.*

My daughters ! while I live, you know my entire affections are with you. But when I am gone, I would yet leave a memorial of myself in your bosoms, of a more durable remembrance there, than the engraved stone that may monument my grave. It is not endowment of lands I bequeath ; for such this roof renders needless to you. Neither is it the sacred book, which has been my own solace from youth to age ; that, too, in accurate copy, was bestowed on each of you, by the same bounteous hand which first taught mine to form the like hallowed characters. No, my daughters, I prepare for you the history of yourselves ; that is, of woman's heart ; but tried, where yours have escaped ;—in the person of your benefactress Berenice. First, indeed, under refuge like this of yours, then on life's wide ocean.

But with that, or with the world, as those words relate to objects beyond this our little haven, you happily feel you have no link as sharers in the conflict. From all the heart-wearying hopes, and soul-clouding dreads of that troubled ocean, heaving constantly with the splendour of vain shows, or of gulf-sinking prospects, you are safe. These peaceful walls have sheltered you, since the earliest years of your orphan childhood ; and will continue to do so, from the hour in which you break this seal, till that in which ye, too, shall



rejoin me in the rest of Paradise. Read, then, this narrative, and learn what you have escaped. Read, and remember the long fostering care of her that made the record. For the manuscript is not to meet your eye, till mine, and hers who planted you here, are shut on mortal life. Read, and bless her memory, who provided you this tranquil homestead, from storms, which so nearly wrecked herself. Lay the lesson to your protected hearts, gratefully; and, teaching it to the young unprofessed maidens of our house, who come among us to learn Heaven's precepts to woman, send them forth duly prepared to fulfil their duties; as the cheering help-mates of them for whom their gentler aid was created. Do this, and I shall not have retraced in vain  
**THE PILGRIMAGE OF BERENICE.**

The day-spring of her morn was brightness. She drew her first breath in the Holy Land; and her earliest consciousness to existence, was finding herself the infant darling of a consecrated sisterhood like ourselves; whose convent, under the title of the House of Saint Mary of Comfort, stood on the eastern side of the Mount of Olives in a deep dell there shaded by groves of that beautiful tree of peace which gives the mount its name. The gentle undulations of the ground immediately about the convent, bloomed a garden. Its mossy softness, and its grassy banks, returned to the light pressure of the passing footsteps, a fragrance that spread every where, from violets and other sweet breathing herbs budding in the pathway. Myrtles, roses, and the scented briars of Carmel, grew also in profusion; clothing that mountain glen with all the splendid hues of their various leaves and flowers, and adding a richer perfume to the already balmy air. A cool and limpid stream, watered this little Eden; social with the walkers on its banks, by its soft murmurs while it rippled along, through the waving sedges, and sighing lilies, in its bed. It was called the Tur, from its dove-like sounds. I have roamed delighted there, of moon-light nights and dewy mornings. For it is the home of my youth, as well as that of Berenice's, I am picturing to your eyes; and its features are fresh to me, as if I were now tracking them, step by step, with the fond, familiar recognition of an actual visit to their scenes.

That well-remembered stream, so sweetly solitary in some of its winding, narrowed paths, at its broadest expanse was deepest; and there a bridge, of one single arch, of

very anciently-sculptured marble, crossed it, and led where our secluded vale, opening to the south, and hung with all the fruits of spring and autumn, formed the convent refectory-garden. The orchard of Pharaoh's daughter, which, tradition says, Solomon the king planted on this very spot, could not have been more variously or amply furnished. The almond-tree, and the fig, the pomegranate, with the bright clustering vines and golden citron, grew from terrace to terrace, in ripening bowers over the strewn ground beneath, for any hand to gather them. And there, at eventide, the joyous children from the cottages near, came on permission, and sported amidst the scattering blossoms, or regaled on the abundant fallen fruit; while the younger sisters of the convent, joined their plays with all the fellowship of mirth and innocence.

This might be called luxury; but it was of nature's providing. In the structure of the convent itself, art had bestowed no pretension, though it had been erected during the imperial times of Constantine the Great, and by his pious mother. But it owed its continued existence, through the many evil days that followed those happier times, to that very humility of aspect. It offered no prize to the spoiler of cities, to turn out of his way to sack such anchorite walls; and disdained, till forgotten, it remained as in a wilderness, a little chapel of refuge for the destitute. For none, then, trod Mount Olivet, but those who fled to sanctuary. Those dreadful times commenced, when the Saracen infidels first overran the Christian empire of the East; and they were numbering, with a blackening calendar, when the mercy of Heaven staid the calamity of the land, and a deliverer was appointed. Godfrey de Bouillon came with his heroes, and Jerusalem was again the emporium of the Christian world.

Still, even then, this little convent remained in the obscurity of its cherished seclusion; for the comforted need not others to meddle with their joy. But on the fifteenth day of July, in each succeeding year, the anniversary of the Holy City's recovery by the Christian arms, the curtain of separation between these sequestered duties, and the contemplation of the great earthly memorials of our faith, seemed for awhile withdrawn; and just as the dawn broke, it was the custom of a certain number of the Sisters of Saint Mary's, to ascend their Mount towards the southern side, and after traversing its peculiarly consecrated spots in

that direction, proceed to the summit, where, viewing the Holy City, they stood uttering their hymns of praise. It was the privilege of each young disciple, on taking the white veil of preparation for a year's ministry in the sick wards of the hospital of Saint John's at Jerusalem, to lead that pilgrim band; and there for the first time behold, though from afar, the spot of her votive duty. St. Mary's, in common with all the other convents adopted into the rule of that charitable commandery, sent thither its serving-sister, at the beginning of every autumn; and received her again, on the expiration of her year, either to assume the black veil of profession, or still to remain an assisting member in the preceptory, a nun, in every religious respect, excepting the vows.

Berenice, as she grew from childhood to youth, often contemplated the busy preparations for that sacred progress of the Mount, with the most animated desires to partake it. She, then, hourly heard talk of Jerusalem, the great parent city of "the chosen people;" whose history she had listened to with wonder, when a child, and afterwards studied daily, with deepening interest, in her own little Greek Bible. But what was yet dearer to the genuine devotions of her young and pure heart, it was the city where the Saviour of mankind had trod; where his tears of tender mercy had bathed its stones; where the tomb, which he had entered once, to unseal for ever, was yet to be beheld! She had lived all the years her brief memory could register, within a few miles of these doubly-consecrated walls, and still the unexplored heights of Olivet reared themselves in interdicting barrier, between her and the objects of her yearly increasing wishes. For each descending group from the annual pilgrimage, told her so much of the magnificent spectacle they had seen; of the august bulwarks of Jerusalem, of the splendid dome, marking the site of the ancient temple, and the palace of David; and, above all, that of the holy sepulchre; beyond which the Christian banner, floating from the citadel top, protected the sacred places in a lasting sanctification. But, to the vivid curiosity of the young scholar, to the ardent piety of her innocent and grateful heart, another circumstance added a personal motive there; augmenting to an almost impassioned yearning, her impatience for the day of her own permission to see what her companions so exultingly described.

On the morning of Berenice's sixteenth birth-day, Paula, the reverend commandress, (for so the rule of the order styled our superior,) put a small scroll of the Gospels into her young charge's hand, telling her, it had been her mother's; and, by that mother's wish, had been reserved, to be given to her on that particular day.

Berenice was surprised at the present; and something awed out of the smiling hilarity with which she had obeyed the summons of the commandress to attend her in her apartment. She had been so happy from her first hour of consciousness, under the fostering care of that kind guardian and the elder nuns, while the younger loved her like sisters, that till this moment, when her deceased parent was so impressively mentioned to her, she had hardly ever thought of any other mother than the venerable woman before her, whose tenderness had been as such to her. Nor, indeed, had she ever questioned within herself, to what rank her parents might have belonged; the mention of either, having never, till now, been brought in any discourse before her; hence she had rested satisfied with the natural conclusion, that, like the other orphans adopted into the foundation, she had been the child of some brave soldier of the crusade, and of a virtuous wife, closing an early widowhood in the quiet asylum of death.

That her mother did indeed close an early deserted state so, was the fact; but of the circumstances concerning it, Berenice had no guess. She had never heard, that, during twelve anxious months of life-consuming, unimpacted hopes and fears, she had been nourished at that mother's bosom. She had never been told, how often that weeping parent had snatched her cherished babe from that swelling breast, lest the bitter pang of some sudden disappointment had tainted the food of nature, and might poison the smiling lip that pressed it. Nor did she know aught of that sadder hour, in which that tender mother felt, the quivering lamp within her, must expire. And then, how gently did she raise the sleeping infant from its cradling on her heart, when finding the chill of death was spreading there, and hold it to the arms henceforth to be its shelter! And why was the child of that fond love, kept ignorant of such affection and such sorrows? With the bequeathment of her babe, the dying parent had enjoined our venerable superior, for it was to her benign care she committed the sacred trust, to spare her

child's early years the knowledge of all that world of woe. She smiled, with a brightening gleam, even while uttering the mournful injunction; for she added, "I would not wither her young heart, with knowledge of a past that cannot be redeemed; nor fill that innocent breast with apprehensions of consequent ills, Providence may direct far from her head. The forsaken may yet be reclaimed!" And then she sealed her lips on the forehead of her child.—She did seal them; for they withdrew not again: they were cold, in that long embrace; and the babe wept. The mother of Berenice was no more.

But ere the scene had drawn to that final close, the dying parent had imparted her last testamentary wishes to the Commandress. The child, who was so far not an orphan as to have a father living, when the anxious mother lay upon her death-bed; she was to be retained under the protection of the house of St. Mary, till her father, or her father's family, should appear, to claim and take her thence. "Nothing but death," the agitated mother had affirmed in her last moments, "could eventually detain the husband of her unswerving faith from coming to restore their child to his arms!" But, meanwhile, she desired that the strictest silence should be preserved to Berenice,—the blameless inheritor of her sex and name,—with regard to whom she had belonged. Though, at the age of sixteen, should she continue so long without recognition by her paternal side, then, on that day—the same in which her mother first left her sacred asylum and became a wife,—the Commandress was to put into the hands of the hitherto unconscious daughter, that copy of the holy Gospels, which had been her mother's solace day and night.

"On the first leaf," she observed, "I have written what will give her some intimation, that she had a mother, stricken in her youth; and whose soul might yet brighten in a daughter's prayers." The words were these,—**"My child! my daughter!—when those you belong to, reclaim you, whether to bear you far away from this land of your birth; or to take you to a stationary home in the holy city, go there! to where your mother's hands have often spread the bed of the wounded, and smoothed the pillow of the sick; where the eye of thankfulness opened on her cherishing watchfulness; and where the bliss, bestowed with a boundless gratitude, and accepted in an evil hour, blighted**

the object of her love, and now brings her with sorrow to the grave.—Child of my happy vows!—daughter of my breaking heart! go, then, to the altar of Saint Magdalen of the holy sepulchre, and pray for the peace of thy mother's soul:—for her ashes will then repose there!—If thy father mingle his tears with those orisons, the past will have ceased its troubles; and Berenice may know that her mother's spirit has found its rest!—Bless thee, my child!”

On Berenice receiving the little volume, which the kind Paula delivered with very few words, (but the simplest, with such a memorial, could not fail affecting the heart of a daughter, though now only recalled for the first time to any steady recollection of her affinity with such feelings,) she opened it with a naturally melancholy reverence. Her eye immediately met the written characters on the leaf before the titlepage, and not being aware of their contents, she began scanning them hastily; but instantly impressed with their solemn import, she stopped and recommenced. And when she had read them silently to an end, she turned to her venerable guardian, with an emotion of soul she had never known before. For she then felt, that whatever kindness the friend or benefactress may bestow, there is yet a something in the interchange of fostering care and soothing gratefulness between a parent and a child, which only the awakened filial heart can conceive; and that never to have known such a throb for the bosom which had so cherished her, and breathed its last sigh in sorrow, appalled and bewildered her.

“Oh, madam!” she exclaimed to the Commandress, “have I now read the address of my mother to me?—my mother, whom I have never been led to think on, during all these years, from infancy till womanhood!”—and a look, even of reproach, shot from among the tears of contrition; then dropping on her burning cheeks.

Our reverend mistress did not immediately answer; nor did she see that accusing glance; for her recollections were busy with the past,—the hour when that inscription was written.—Berenice's quick apprehension saw, in that venerable countenance, that whatever might be the reasons which had hitherto held her silent on the sacred subject, which then evidently engrossed her thoughts, unkindness to the memory of the parent was not one of them; and therefore, in a voice, in which undiminished respect again mingled with its deepened tones of filial regret, she more

calmly added :—“ Tell me now, reverend madam, who was my mother !—Surely, nothing I ought to shrink from knowing! for, were she even one of the humblest serving-sisters of St. John’s, or one of the poorest pilgrims that waited there, I should indeed feel no disgrace in avowing my gratitude at its gates for the alms she may have received there.”

With these words, tears ran over her now pale cheeks ; and the Commandress taking her into her arms, for a while they wept silently together. Then, straining her young charge tenderly to her breast, the venerable lady seated her beside her, and with a soothing firmness replied :—

“ My child ! your mother’s virtues were of a nature to command the fullest reverence of her daughter ; and for her station, she had been accustomed to dispense, not receive. Who she was, I am not yet at liberty to tell you. But that she was noble, you may judge by the information I can give. For, ere she became a wife, she was an unprofessed sister of the chapter of Saint Magdalen at Jerusalem ; and none can be so, but who are of unspotted lineage. Then, for an inheritance of poverty ; Berenice, look to the manner of your rearing here. Do you see any of the daughters of the endowment, lodged as you are lodged ? served, as you are attended ? or, above all, educated with the high branches of woman’s accomplishments, which are taught you ?”

Berenice’s flowing tears were checked by new surprise, at this reply, so full of deference to the condition of parents, one of which, the evidence in her hand told her, had died in sorrow ; and the other,—she was yet to inquire his fate ! Was he still living, to yearly furnish the house of her asylum with such unusual means for the maintenance of his child ? For ere she answered her protectress with the obvious inference, rapid recollection made her remark, what indeed she had never observed before, the wide difference between her style of establishment in the convent, and that of her young companions.—A distinction which her genuine unselfish nature had hitherto prevented her noticing, and from the simple circumstance alone, of every privilege she possessed, whether in place, table, amusements, or any thing else, having been freely shared among them. In the full enjoyment of an universal participation, it never had occurred to her that

she was more than the happy promulgator of their kind preceptress's indulgences.—Her little cell, situated next to that of the venerable lady, was indeed hung with beautiful arras, like to that made beyond sea, and brought to the Holy Land by the brave crusaders; but this, Berenice was now told, had been wrought by her mother, during her sojourn within its very walls. It pictured the story of David in his flight from Saul, with Abigail kneeling at his feet, veiled in the manner of the east, and pouring out an offering of fruits and flowers before him.

To see this, the young novices had often collected into her apartment, either for the pleasure of renewing their admiration of its nicely-executed needlework, or of imitating some of the luxuriantly coloured tribute, on the canvass of their own embroidery; and never, indeed, did she then find remark, either from them, or in herself, of any intended difference to the occupier, between walls so covered, and those of their little dormitories of merely plastered stone. And then she had books of curious penmanship, in many languages; and she was taught those languages, and how to write the characters in those books; but learning was so easy to her, it never occurred to her there could be any such extraordinary labour in teaching, as to make it costly; and so few in the house seemed to regard these usually only clerical acquirements, as any thing better than acts of supererogatory penance by one of their own sex, that a wish of rivalry never rose to hint to her the peculiarity of condition such studies might imply.

But before she could draw any distinct conclusion to herself, from observations so hastily summoned, the commandress again spoke; and, enumerating such obvious recollections, accompanied with her own remarks, also pointed out other minor distinctions, which, Berenice felt, while respectfully listening, would otherwise never have been noticed by herself. And while the noble lady ran over the little catalogue, with the yet unrelinquished air of one born of the privileged order she implied, and to whom the world had once taught the honorary value of even the smallest distinction; her young charge, who had never seen that world, attended with an increasing surprise, at such petty things being considered a difference; but she silently made that response in her heart. Besides remarking on her apartment's unusual furniture for the mind, avowedly



most precious to her, she was to observe that her bed was down!—But how, indeed, could she have noticed this at all? for, never having slept on any other, it was out of her power to compare its softness with the harder texture of the sisterhood's common felt. Her cup, too, at meals, was of silver, chased; and her salver of the same material! But what of that? What is seen every day, can scarcely be expected to strike us as any thing extraordinary; and, particularly, as the costly chalice, which bore her name, gave no more cooling refreshness to the clear water of the river, when poured sparkling from the refectory vase of the convent, than did the most ordinary potter's vessel on the same board; nor did her daily bread taste sweeter from the shining metal, than from the roughest oaken trencher that might have been presented to her. But on festivals, and other holidays, when conserves, rare fruits, and other viands, were brought out in more than customary donation, did not some singular deference exhibit itself, in their always being laid before her first? No, no; it was not Berenice who could make such translation. It had seemed to her, that happy accidents were ever giving her the seat of almoner of the feast; and, with a blithesome and bounteous hand she dispensed the banquet. "The cost," observed her protectress, "is the overplus from your own necessaries. For your mother's bequest, provided for your liberality, as well as comfort."

This latter remark did indeed affect the heart of her auditor with many new sensations; with consciousness of power, and a strange emotion of delightfulness, mingling with her so lately simple feelings of filial regret alone. Was she, then, to understand that she had received this, a before accounted bounty from the convent, as a right? And, that she was born of parents so much greater or richer than those of her daily companions, that these advantages must remain with her continually?

Smiling at the thoughts this new view of things presented to her; the capacity of a munificent benevolence, beyond the social little treat of a sister's name-day; or the small doles of charity she had hitherto supposed the utmost of her orphan means, when blushing bestowed on any of the poorest order of pilgrims, whom she occasionally met in their passage across the mount, to the chapel of the grave of Saint Lazarus.

"Ah, Madam!" cried she, her before humid eyes sparkling with pleasure; "so will I dedicate the superflux, my honoured parents have bestowed on me! making myself, indeed, happy in the comfort of those poor pious travellers; for they shall have both clothes, and food, and money in their scrips. And I know my sisters of the convent will rejoice in resigning, for so delightful a purpose, all the little indulgences, they so unconsciously derived at my hands."

The anxious Paula, glad that her pupil's excited feelings took this still home turn; planning to retread, only more extensively, the accustomed paths of her yet brief life; and, the good lady not being authorized to answer distinctly all the questions Berenice had asked, or implied, respecting her parents, now here broke up the conference; and embracing her with an approving affection, told her to gratify her heart with both acts of kindness, without restricting either; since the little cruse her mother had bequeathed, was sufficiently blessed, not yet to lack the means of fulfilling purposes so worthy the offspring of a daughter of the Hospitallers of Jerusalem.

From that day, Berenice naturally took more observation of the peculiar circumstances to which the commandress's disclosures had directed her attention; and could not but perceive the tacit distinction paid to her by the elder nuns of the establishment, while the serving-sisters of the same standing, were even obsequious in their diurnal duties. Berenice, without being able to assign the reason to herself, was much less gratified with these inferences, than when she received the same as part of the common service demanded for her young companions also; only, perhaps, a little augmented to herself, by the partial fondness of persons, her own affectionate disposition was constantly propitiating by the most endearing acts. And well might she be so long blind to any extraordinary privileges in herself, since the seemingly spontaneous services they so often dictated, were almost always instantly turned by her into some channel of wished indulgence for one or other of her orphan sisterhood.

She now also noticed, that besides the costly hangings, every minute article in her cell was of superior quality to any she saw elsewhere. But then, they had been her mother's. The tapestry wrought by her hand; the little

golden shrine, supporting the gemmed crucifix ; every thing told the same story—the wealth of her parents. But they also bore a more precious record to her—they were more than presumptive evidence, that she belonged to some of those noble pairs, who, in the first years of the crusade, had sought Palestine, to succour the oppressed, and who had perished in the cause. In vain she attempted, during after conversations with the commandress, to draw from that kind, but cautious lady, either by caresses, or the most imploring persuasions, the names, or history in any way, of her father or mother. All the answer was, that she must rest satisfied with the information already given, till her eighteenth year ; when, if she were not then reclaimed by her father's family, she was to make her own pilgrimage of the Mount ; and then, ere she proceeded to the sacred noviciate, such as her mother had filled in the wards of the Holy Hospital, a sealed coffer would be delivered to her ; and, on opening it, she would find the solving of every mystery she now wanted to know. " For," continued Paula, " without the names of both parents are revealed to the grand commandress there, to establish the legitimacy and honours of the claimant's birth, no novice can be received into that illustrious chapter of the order of Saint John, but in the inferior rank of serving-damsel on the sisterhood itself."

Berenice had never contemplated the possibility of any rank being allotted to her, within those famed walls of benevolence, below that in which she might dedicate the warm enthusiasm of her high-raised piety, to those offices alone which comprehend the ministries of that benevolence ; and the flush of a pride, till that moment an unconscious inmate of her breast, kindled to her cheek at the bare idea. Regarding, then, the memorials about her in a new light ; and cherishing their preservation, as the warrant of an honourable admission one day, to the duties which her mother had shared, and to those which her heart yearned to pay at her tomb, she at last resigned herself to await, with contented patience, the stated hour, when the opening of the promised coffer should make her the happy mistress of so hallowed a destiny.

But that which had been revealed, was sufficient to excite some change in her hitherto perfectly felicitous heart. Till that moment of uncertain knowledge, all had been gay, unclouded paradise within her. Thoughtless of fro' whom

she sprung, only that she had found herself in a garden of sweets where she knew no wants, she was then happy ; looking to God alone, as the donor to herself, in common with all those who lived under the same roof of comfort, that was her home. But now, she seemed to have belonged to a world,—might have been reclaimed to it,—of which she never had thought, while reading its histories in the books around her, but as the vision of a city, that had been ; and whose site was known no more ; at least to her it was so.

But these disclosures made her ponder on what that real world actually was ; on what the endearing affections of its different relations, truly were ; and to feel a melting, or, a kindling in her bosom, when she now dwelt on the storied page, that told of Joseph's tenderness to his brother Benjamin ; of Ruth's filial piety to her husband's desolate mother : of Jonathan's friendship for the persecuted David ; of Jacob's fostering care over the fond, but repining Rachel. In all these, the world of a thousand years ago, she found the human heart, as it might be, in her own bosom ; for while she read or meditated, an answering throb often told her, there was the sympathy ; and then a passing thrill would light its centre, with some fond wish to share such tendernesses ; but it was only the flash of an instant ; falling like a shooting star, and unregretted, amidst the familiar prospects of her youth—a vestal path, in veiled deeds of charitable ministry, always conducting to the seclusion of piety and peace.

Such, indeed, were the habitual views of Berenice's mind ; but again and again the phantoms of something beyond them, would recur to her, and not always confined to the lonely hours of her silent study. She would often find herself wandered away alone, from her young companions during their seasons of rural pastime, and, almost lost among the rarely-trodden thickets, muse about her origin, conjecturing whether her father, whom she could not but suppose some illustrious knight of the first crusade, were yet living : (for on that subject the commandress had positively denied any satisfaction ; ) or did he also sleep by her mother in the grave.—Impressed with this last idea, as most consistent with her never having heard of, or seen him, during the to her long stretch of seventeen years—her whole life, indeed ! —whether her orisons were breathed in the recess of her cell, or in the chapel of nature where she walked, her eyes

ever turned as to the *kebla* of her heart, on that part of the heavens which canopied the tomb of one parent, who had desired her prayers, and might also that of the other.

But these musings were not always solitary. There were a few sisters in the house, for whom Berenice entertained a peculiar degree of affection ; and with one or two of these most beloved companions, she would either stray in confidential discourse, or, lighter of spirits, ramble carelessly among the luxuriantly beautiful, or wildly romantic scenery of Olivet.

But her chief delight was to take their course down its more rocky side, towards a well, near a palm-grove ; which had once shed its dates over the mounded remains of the little mansion of the Sisters of Lazarus. There Berenice used to deposite her pretty osier baskets, filled with nicely-culled fruit, and wheaten cakes, which her own hands had prepared the previous day ; adding a few pieces of money in each, for the poor pilgrims to the Saint's tomb ; who might usually be descried most Wednesdays, about set of sun, passing down that quarter of the mount, towards the refreshment of its cooling spring. But ere they arrived there, she and her companions had generally left their little offerings in the niches of its ivy-mantled arcade, built to shelter the pure water alike from the direct heat of the summer, and the falling leaves of autumn. Her baskets were each surmounted with a little wooden cross—a sufficient index, their contents were meant for the scrips of the pilgrims ; and, when found empty next morning, by the convent servitors, they were brought away, to be replenished by the same young hands, for the succeeding day's similar deposite.

But it was not only to the scantily-provided, houseless traveller, of the holy faith she herself shared, that Berenice became as the heaven-commissioned bird of the wilderness ; unseen, and unsuspected, supplying the wants of the wayfaring destitute. In her solitary, thoughtful rambles, which, during such moods were usually turned toward an abrupt height, remote from the convent boundaries, and whence she fancied she could catch a glimpse of the brook Kedron winding there ; and, therefore washing the base of the very hill of Jerusalem, she most wished to behold in reality ; while straining her sight to trace its sparkling waters through the thronging olive groves, she sometimes discerned a few dingy-habited Turks, slowly journeying

along a neglected old causeway, lost almost in the thicket; and from those very circumstances, evidently selected as their securest path. Berenice being fully aware that the conquered state of this once dominant and oppressive people, kept them so hourly apprehensive of retaliation, that they receded everywhere from chance of a Christian's notice, thought it probable, that her eye alone of any from the convent had ever lit on these sort of travellers.

Sometimes they appeared in groupes of three or four, mostly on foot, but when mounted, only on the commonest beasts of burthen.—Now and then, but rarely, she might descry, some single figure of bold and erect mien, wearing, in that privileged solitude, the crescent scimitar, and the unkirtled poniard; both, betrayed to her sight, from that deep valley to the height above, by the sun-reflecting glancing of their brassy hilts.—Sometimes another object would attract her longer notice; would make her pause in her walk, to meditate, and pity what she saw: some old man, tottering alone over that broken causeway, staggering at every blast; for many met him from the riven sides of the numerous ravines; which intersecting that wild region, like tunnels fraught with pent up winds, scorched or bleakly withered, according to the season in which the current blew.

Once, she met such an aged Moslem traveller, and making thus his lonely journey.—It was nearer to her customary boundaries, than the road she had so often observed, and she happened to be alone. For it was mid-day, and very hot; and in consequence of that, while her usual companions, as well as the elder nuns, were retired from the extraordinary heat into their cells, she had volunteered to finish that day's duty for one of the old serving-sisters, and visit the sick cottagers, for her, at the bottom of the convent-hill. Under such a meridian sun, she had naturally sought the most shady, and therefore some of the most sequestered tracks that lay between Saint Mary's and the little hamlet; and in one of those very bye-paths, she met the object of so unexpected a rencontre. The traveller, evidently of the most patriarchal years, was walking slowly, feebly supported by a staff.—A green turban bound his head; and the eyebrows beneath it, were full and snowy white as his long sweeping beard. The rest of his raiment was of the humblest class of Turks. On her sudden turning into the path where he was, the moment he appeared to hear steps, he stumbled,

and must have fallen, had she not instinctively sprang forward, and caught him on her arm. He looked up, and saw it was a Christian woman who had assisted him, and one, too, of the holy orders. For the large, gray, pilgrim-like hat, worn by novices who had not yet assumed any veil, then shadowed the beautiful countenance of Berenice; more beautiful from the respectful pity that beamed there.

"Damsel!" cried he, "it would ill become me, to shake off, as a viper, the hand that has sustained me. Lead me whither I want to go, not many paces from this spot; and I will pray the prophet, to make thee his; or there wash me from this defilement, necessity forces on me!" The old man trembled while he spoke, and yet leaned heavily on his half-repulsed supporter.

"I belong to one," replied she, "who is the protector, as he was the creator of all men! Therefore, as his creature, I sustain thee, venerable Moslem! Nor would I fear to do the same, by the most spotted Pagan that idolatry ever polluted with its leprosy;—my divine master, has so taught me human duty."

The aged Turk did not answer. He was very faint; and, while clinging closer to the fragile little arm that tenderly held him; pointed with his other hand to the deviously-winding tracks she was to take. Thus, for some time, he silently directed her. And, with amazement at every new turning, she conducted him by seemingly untrodden ways; so intricately tortuous were they, among the clefted rock and thicket, that had they not now been disclosed to her, she never could have guessed any thing else lay behind that rough and thorny surface, than the solid mass of the mountain. The narrow path in which she guided the steps of the traveller, was rugged with jagged rock; and the roots of decayed trees, struck deep through the numerous fissures, more than once caused him to rest in the difficult road. She offered him refreshment from a flask of milk, in her basket for the cottagers. He hesitated; then placing the little vessel for a moment within his bosom, bowed to the east while he held it there; that done, he took it thence, drank a small portion, and returning it to her, blessed her.

She had been nearly half an hour leading him thus, when the precipitous gorge of a high stony dell presented itself; rising indeed so perpendicularly, that it seemed some prison-dungeon, where the fire of a noon sun, shooting direct down-

wards from the cylinder-shaped top, (the wooded height opening only there to the sky,) collected into such furnace-like heat from the reflecting rocky walls that it might have rather been supposed a place of penance than of refuge. On entering within its portal cliffs, Berenice's eye glanced with one look around, and beheld at the further end, a group of persons crouching under the scanty shade of a piece of tattered black canvass, hooked over them from one projecting angle of the craig to another. A child, of about four years old, sat between two of them; a young and an elderly man. It was crying bitterly, while a woman, wrapped up in a dirty blue-striped chadre, (the totally enveloping veil of Mahometan women,) was trying to persuade the miserable little creature to eat a bit of something, dark as the sheet over its head, and looking indeed like a morsel of the same, rent off in mockery of the poor babe's clamorous hunger.

Berenice shuddered, on perceiving the pale, starved face of the child, who seemed sick, as well as famishing. And she shrunk, with some apprehension also, on finding herself so remote from all the known paths of the convent, and alone with so many infidels, of manifestly the lowest order of hopeless poverty. For though starvation was not marked on the countenances of either of the two men, a gloomy distress was sufficiently legible in the one, and a desperate recklessness on the other. The woman's face was not at all visible; for while her two male companions were touching the ground with their foreheads, at sight of the old Moslem's turban, of their prophet's colour, she, as conscious only to the approach of a man not of her kindred, drew her shroud-like veil closer over her; showing nothing of a living body under it but the long bony fingers with which she continued to force her loathsome food into the child's mouth, till it shrieked again.

At this, Berenice forgot every thing but the poor struggling innocent before her; and starting from the old man's side, in the sudden impulse, for she well divined the cause of the little creature's augmented distress, immediately put her basket of nicely culled provisions, fresh and fragrant, into the child's hand.—In one moment it snatched one of the delicate and wholesome cakes, from under the covering vine-leaves, and devoured it. The father, the elder of the two men, had stretched out his arm to wrest the basket from the child; for a glance discovered to him it was a Chris-



tian woman who had bestowed it. But the old Moslem, who had taken his seat within the arch of a shallow recess in the cliff, called out to him to forbear!

“I am a Hadjé, as thou seest!” cried he; “and having a sacred fillet from Mecca, bound on my breast, what it touches is sacred also. The damsel has given me to drink, from that basket. She has supported my steps thus far to the land of my fathers, where I mean to die. Fear not then to take her offering, for my lips have hallowed it.”

No more demur was made. And Berenice gladly saw the child dry its poor cheeks, and with sparkling eager eyes recommence banquetting from her little store. When it appeared satisfied, the automaton mother, who otherwise seemed insensible to any benefit having been bestowed, took the basket; and carefully wrapping it, with its contents, in a heap of woollen garments; thrust the whole, with the child fallen asleep, among them, under the stomach of a quiet *chamor*; (the commonest sort of all the many tribes of ass in the country.) which stood, tethered, and half dosing, close to the edge of the scanty awning. At some further distance, another beast of the same order, but of larger bulk, and bolder mettle, lay rolling its shaggy body from side to side, in the short mossy sort of grass which clothed, in green patches, the bottom of the chasm.

While Berenice's quick observation in a scene so new, noticed all this, the old Moslem, her charge thither, had called her again towards him. He sat on the bare ground, in the mouth of the recess; and, behind him, not very deeply sunk in the rock, a small pool of perpetually replenished water was visible. This, indeed, constituted the peculiar value of the place, as a hidden asylum for Mahometan travellers of every description; the track lying just in their way, either for errands of kindred communications; or of secret merchandise; with their fugitive brethren scattered throughout lower Syria; or on religious progress across the desert, to Mecca or Medina. For those who had been; or who intended the latter, the shelter of the arched recess was reserved; and, therefore, the Hadjé had taken his place there. When Berenice drew near him, he looked up steadfastly in her face.

“Alla has been gracious to that face!” cried he, “and thy actions of this day, have been worthy the gift.”

He then told her the purpose of the place into which she

had brought him ; and that it was the only spot, between the Moslem hovels, yet allowed them in the suburbs of Jerusalem, and the fortis of Jordan, where one of his wayfar- ing brethren could rest. " It is our last asylum of the kind," continued he ; " and only that remains because it is unsuspected." Hence he conjured her, never to divulge what she had then seen, to those whose fanaticism might deem it piety to deprive them of it.

" If I ever should speak of this place," returned Berenice, " it would be to those whom my conscience knows to be such true servants of the Saviour of mankind, that, like yon stream oozing from the rock, to cool every feverish lip that approaches it, their zeal to bestow good would imitate the Being that opens yon rock ; and the weary, who wander, here, would then find no violation of their rest ; but that provision for their wants, which God provides, and only he can sanctify !"

The old man bent his head, and kissed the hem of the light gray mantle that covered her. " Fare thee well, in peace !" said he : then, turning to the two other men, who sat under the shadow of their dark turbans, gazing on the Christian woman ; the younger with a sort of lowering feature, which, on her turning also, and perceiving it, made her shrink within herself ;—What, then, was her terror, when she heard the Hadjé order him, to re-conduct her back through the intricacies of the ways which had brought her to their sanctuary, and there leave her. The man rose with alacrity ; but ere he could advance, Berenice had taken out her purse ; and, approaching him, with a calmness of manner she was far from feeling inwardly, at once declined any guide in a path she had trod so recently ; and, proffering him the purse, gently asked whether that might not purchase the temporary use of the larger chamor, (which was then risen, and cropping the rich herbage from the crannies of the rocks,) for the easier travel of their venerable countryman.

A few more apprehensive moments, on her side, and of almost speechless gratefulness on the Hadjé's, settled the acceptance and appropriation of the treasure she had bestowed. The young Moslem, with a fierce smile of surprised delight, full as alarming as his former suspicious scowl, gave an immediate burrah of assent ; and the whole of his party, with one accord, fell at her feet ; for even the

hitherto insensible, veiled woman, at the sight of the gold, had been moved ; and Berenice returned their loud invocations to Alla in her behalf, with a trembling eagerness in the sincere benediction with which she bade them farewell.

The next instant she was beyond the rocky portal ; and, with flying footsteps thridding the mazy path even as by instinct, she issued, breathless, from its thickets ; and, finding herself once more safe on the well known, and commonly frequented glades of the mount, most fervently directed her thanks to Heaven.

The other charitable office this extraordinary adventure had turned her from at the time, was, nevertheless, fulfilled the same evening. And, when the whole was confided to the beneficent priest, who was alike her confessor, and instructor in all the high matter of her education, she knew he would confirm what he had taught her, by himself assisting her to perform her pledge to the poor Moslem Hadjé. And the good man honoured her confidence ; for, from that day, no wretched traveller ever entered that hidden refuge, without finding food and raiment : deposited, indeed, by hands unseen, and therefore generally appropriated with a frugal deference to the invisible benefactor.

The sisters of a convent will not weary over the monotony of pursuits, recorded of one like themselves, whose chief business in life was to acquire a pious contentment, whose pleasure was to promote it in others. But if ye weary of that noiseless track with Berenice, ye will soon find it drew very near its close. After her meeting with the Hadjé, she rarely ventured to take her walks quite alone ; and her most usual companion was a young preceptress called Mildred. Those sisters of Saint Mary's who had passed their year of attendance in the holy hospital at Jerusalem, always took that title on their return, as teachers of the novices, preparing them to fulfil the same duties, in the same office.

With Mildred, Berenice often extended her rambles along the eastern brow of Olivet, with some of the sacred books in her hand ; whence she read to her, portions of scenes, which every object before them deepened in interest ; being the very theatre of those doubly consecrated events. Berenice frequently closed her little volume, and pausing in their walk, leaned on the arm of Mildred, to gaze with her on the silver flood of Jordan, as they caught its

rapid course glancing between the openings of the hills, lying yet more eastward than Olivet, towards the river. Berenice's eyes shone with the enthusiasm natural to her disposition, while she asked her friend in a scarcely breathed whisper, "if she could not distinguish the ark of Israel, rising radiant from that wave, and its white robed supporters emerging with it?"

Mildred usually smiled at these bursts from her friend; though far from insensible to such visions of the soul; feeling that they never occur, but as shadows of a past, whose realities have stamped their existence on the mind and heart. The heart! for the mind may learn, but it is the heart that companions us with the noble exemplars we see or hear of.

When advanced opposite some more expanded vista in the hills, they would look far across the vast intermediate space, to the distant mountains of Arabia, red and glowing in the evening sun, and wonder to each other what the world was beyond them.

Did the rebellious descendants of Ishmael yet scour those terrific deserts, in lawless depredation of every other man; or might the tent of Hagar be found in any part,—still to remind her sons that the blood they would shed, and that in their own veins, drew their sources from a kindred spring? Both friends longed to explore those deserts; to see the daughters of the land—and, if it were possible, teach them the humanities of their own beneficent bosoms.

"And in time, our pilgrims passing thither, to and from the new Christian dominions east of the great desert, may do it," observed Berenice, "for kindness is the best teacher of itself. And how amply such persons, often wealthy as well as pious, have it in their power to soften the hearts of the destitute, (too frequently rendered obdurate, by the hardness of unpitied suffering,) my own little means of judging, has given me sufficient proof."

"Yes," rejoined Mildred, (to whom alone besides her confessor, Berenice had revealed the circumstance of the Moslem travellers,) "to despair of our fellow-creatures, is to make them desperate, or to keep them so. He that made all men of one family, and willed they should return to the same again, bade us hope all things! And, therefore, I can now open my seer eye, with yours!" added the young preceptress, with an ingenuous smile, "and see the

veil of separation between the natives of yon desert, and this holy mount, passing away like a mist of the morning."

"Beware of teaching any of our wayfarers between Jordan and Euphrates that pleasant dream!" exclaimed a voice behind them. On looking round, they perceived the Baroness de Hardres, a noble lady, who had entered the convent as a temporary boarder, only a few months before. She, with another, not quite so recently a member of the establishment, had approached the two contemplative friends unheard, till the moment of her speaking; and then she gayly continued her remarks,—“Knight or friar, trusting to such vision, might wake rather suddenly, in other circumstances than ladies’ bower, or palmer’s date grove! Believe me, the sun of benevolence must shine for many a century yet, ere the fog you talk of be quite exhaled. Look on yon moon, exalting her bright horns over the desert; stealing the light she acknowledges not and ever the object of its wandering inhabitant’s misapplied worship!—First, the freebooting goddess, their idolatrous rebellions, preferred to the just restraints of their fathers; then, the crescent ensign of an equally untrammelling faith, for impunity and plunder! Trust me, certain dispositions confirmed by certain habits, must have a long time, before your gently insinuated alterations in the one, can make any real change in the other;—and yet I grant ye, there is no other way of ever turning the sword of the wild Arab into a home-keeping pruning-hook!”

“And, a bloody sword it is!—day by day making many a helpless being, homeless!” ejaculated the Baroness’s young companion, who then mournfully added, “I lost a father, under its merciless stroke.”

“Indeed, dear Salomé,” rejoined Berenice, turning with an awakened interest to these affecting words, uttered by one hitherto so proverbially silent among the sisters, that after being made to observe the determined reserve of her manner on her first coming to the convent, none had ever proposed a question on her sadness. Mildred, equally surprised, and with a less sympathetic feeling of the pang she might probe, in her eagerness to plead contrition for an injurious feeling in herself, abruptly exclaimed, “Alas Salomé! how I have wronged you! Your gloom was sorrow; not the austerity of selfish seclusion! You have known, and

lost a home, other than this convent! Can you forgive me?"

Salomé did not reply, but her tears did; and she laid her hand gently on that of Mildred, and pressed it. Berenice felt the touch of a daughter upon her heart; and though not sharing the remorseful appeal of her friend, sought to soften its agitating want of caution, by appearing to partake a portion of similar affliction, to that the young novice mourned; and in a soothing faltering voice, she gently rejoined, "This is a home of peace for us, dear Salomé! and I, too, have reason to bless it. For what else than the death of my father also, can have deprived me from infancy, till now, of his embrace? Alas, I never tasted that sacred joy!" Self-pity closed that sentence; and the full tear in her eye was not then for Salomé alone.

The kindly Baroness, distressed at the turn the conversation had taken, now tried by a few cheering words to her first companion, to divert it into another channel, but Salomé shook her head;—"No, madam, no;" exclaimed she, "it would be better for me if I could forget I ever had a home in happy Edessa!—Oh, that word!—Edessa! dear Edessa! Its fragrant dewy mornings, and the glad voices issuing from our gate! Its evening hearth, when my own hands spread the board for the smiling return of them I shall never see again—my father! my father!" And she looked wildly towards the east, while rapidly adding—"He, the bond of all, fell in yon very desert, defending our lives and freedom, against a furious onset of its fiercest Arabs! The robbers were put to flight, but in that moment, an arrow pierced him!—and, covered with his blood, I received his last embrace!" Salomé covered her face with her hands, and ceased to speak. To speak themselves, in this her heart's sacred pause, was not in the mind of any present. Tears alone now proclaimed their sympathy; tears silently shed from all but Berenice, and she sobbed convulsively.

The Baroness, however, was the first to dissolve the painful meditations, into which the agitated feelings of the little party subsided; and again she addressed Salomé, with a consolatory reference to her youth; the prospect of a happy life yet before her; when the tranquillizing offices of the holy asylum she had chosen, should have reconciled her to her loss; and prepared her to enjoy, and to do her duty,

in the other tender relations, she must well know, Edessa still reserved for her. Salomé raised her bent-down head, and almost looked her answer to the Baroness. Her pale face was now entirely visible, excepting where the broad shadow of her hat fell, doubly darkening her already deeply engloomed countenance.

"Yes," repeated she, "I am conscious to what you tell me; I am where heavenly comfort will come to me; but I go no more to seek happiness on earth. From the hour in which I saw my father perish in that fatal journey, undertaken for such happiness, I vowed to devote the life he had died to preserve, to prayer and penance; and here, I fulfil the sacrifice!"

Her hand was pressed close to her heart with these last words, uttered in a tone that penetrated the soul of Berenice, while it amazed her. Cherished grief, for a parent so lost, she thought she could fully comprehend; but the profounder was in the accent, which pronounced the mourner's present selected refuge, a place of penance in its holy offices, she could not at all understand; and, with the whole ardour of a nature eager to rekindle in the crushed spirit of another, some embers of the happiness she often felt glowing in her own bosom, from a sense of joy in existence, and its duties alone; suddenly drying away the tears that yet hung on her long, modest eyelashes, in a rather apprehensive but yet energetic voice, she said, "Oh, Salomé, look on me! I believe myself an orphan like you,—nay, not like you; for I have never known a parent's home. Had I but once enjoyed, with the full consciousness of my heart, but one pressure to my mother's, or my father's bosom, then I could have turned, with bliss unalloyed, to the tranquil, sacredly protected happiness of this our granted asylum. For no yearning, unsatisfied desire, would then have invaded the peace of this my path to paradise! It is so, to you, to all of us, my sister! Beyond it,—there open the gates, where those we mourn have entered, and where we shall mourn no more!"

Berenice, at that moment, while speaking, gazed on a wide aerial sea of light, which, tracking the opposite horizon, extended its luminous, yet soft azure, under an arch of glowing clouds; as if there did indeed unfold the haven of heaven.

Salomé's dark eye followed that look ; and gladly would she have felt her's brighten in the view ; but the chill within her, seemed a heart and soul : and, therefore, with a sigh of almost hopeless self-commiseration, yet grateful for the comfort meant, she gently answered, " So be it, kindest sister ! may thy joys ever continue thus, of the spirit alone ; and the earth cannot take them from thee ! "

Berenice received the prayer warm to her gracious heart, but she did not understand the whole of its ambiguous import. Salomé felt her own necessity for such an invocation. She found her soul fettered, at one point, to the earth she had rejected. And though determined by a headlong kind of self-abandonment, to withdraw herself for ever from every object, however dear, that seemed to have impelled her father's fate ; yet, it was not with the freed spirit of a solely heaven-dedicated vestal. A superstitious dread of blood-guiltiness, demanding the surrender, hung over her like a doom of hardly-suspended justice ; and giving herself a victim for the fancied crime ; (no more, in truth, than her father losing his life, in a journey, undertaken, indeed, with no other object than to secure her happiness with a long attached lover ; ) she continued to bewail, in silent loneliness of heart, not merely her parent's timeless death, but the irrevocable separation that was its consequence, between her and the betrothed husband of her virgin vows ; and, night after night, saw the scalding tear drop on each bead of her rosary, which numbered her soul's wordless prayer for him.

Salomé, feeling all this, might have envied Berenice the pure simplicity of her self-dedication ; had she retained enough indulgence for herself, as to form any wish—but to be forgiven of heaven for her guiltless crime, and then forget her sorrows in the grave ! In this temper, she now turned away from her companions ; and, with her usual melancholy abstracted look, struck into a solitary path.

The lady of Hardres, left alone with Mildred and Berenice, ejaculated, " Poor Salomé de Fluvian ! she has, indeed, much to deplore ; and the struggle between the halo, of the saint, and the wedding garland—thorns and flowers—of a simple Christian woman, is yet upon her ! ' I, too, have lived long enough in the dear Edéssa she laments, to know her sacrifice. "

At this declaration Berenice and Mildred drew nearer



to the Baroness. As it was a rule of the convent never to make the private histories of any of its members, a subject of information to the others, none, except the Commandress, ever knew who or whence they were, until they chose to extend the communication themselves; therefore Berenice and her friend now, for the first time, heard the most celebrated city of Mesopotamia, connected with the names of Salomé and the lady of Hardrea. And the eagerness with which both her auditors grasped at every species of information bearing on the objects of their favourite reading, now loaded her with a thousand questions respecting that "delightful land"—a sojourn of the Jewish earliest patriarchs; and tradition told was also that, whose magi hailed the star of Bethlehem; and where first a Christian kingdom was established in the east.

"I believe the fact," returned the Baroness, "but those good times passed away for a season; and many dark and fair days, has that really 'delightful land' seen since!—Pagans, Mahometans, and now Christians again, possessing the crown of the so justly-famed Abgarus!" The kind lady then proceeded, though repeatedly interrupted by variously-excited new interrogatories, to patiently make rejoinders to them all, till the whole string of her answers gave a desultory sort of information, that might be comprised thus.

"I am old enough to remember as a young married woman—not twenty years ago—when Godfrey de Bouillon and his two brothers, Baldwin and Eustace, with many renowned warriors besides, came first to the rescue of the Holy Land. The sea, you know, is its fair boundary to the west; and there, our crusade ships, could readily make their own frontier. To the east, the sandy desert, by its vastness, was also a manageable barrier. But to the south, lay Egypt; the one great stronghold of the Soldan infidels, who then trod Palestine under foot; while to its north, stretched Mesopotamia between the two great rivers, Tigris and Euphrates, like a noble castle within its moats. And whoever possesses that country, may be said to hold the gate of Palestine in that quarter; having power to repel any invasion by the infidel Kaliphs of Asia, now residing at Bagdad; and who, indeed, excepting Mesopotamia, are lords of all north or east of those two mighty rivers. But Mesopotamia was theirs also, at the time of Godfrey's

landing ; and to secure such a frontier, such a bulwark, to cover his meditated deliverance of the Holy Land, was that experienced general's first object. I have often heard my husband speak on this subject, and describe his commander's movements to that effect."

"Edessa was the capital, and the fortress, of this invaluable line of country ; and round its three ranges of circumvallating battlements, the Christian army disposed itself. But I shall not enter into the particulars of that terrific, and glorious siege ; suffice it to say, that after prodigies of valour, Eustace and Baldwin de Bouillon gained the walls in one quarter ; and Godfrey, with De Bourg, and their followers on the other. My Baron and his, were with the latter. The town was carried ; and with it, the whole sovereignty of the so often contested barrier land. And, shall I ever forget that land, as I first beheld it, when my husband, crowned with victory, brought me from the reserve of the Christian camp, to take up a residence in the new garrison. The country, bearing no trace of war, but extending, in the most lovely undulations of hill and dale, from the bank of one noble river to the other ; the rapid Tigris rolling like a cataract ; the majestic Euphrates, covered with our boats !

"In some parts, it certainly is wild ; for the Moslem has left his marks there. But in general it is neither scathed desert, nor matted forest, but beautiful in its remotest solitudes,—gardens of sweets, only wanting the hands of some happy pairs, to dress and enjoy them.—That boon was given to me, and I did not reject it ; my husband's station being rather to the east of the city, towards the mountainous district of ancient Charrhæ. The pomegranate, the abundant vine ; and every teeming fruit tree, were there, in luxuriant wildness ; the remains of former cultivated grandeur. But even then, the side of every smooth hill, and the depths of each verdant little valley, were whitened over with sheep ; such as followed Rebecca's crook, when she led the flocks of her brother Laban.

"Yes ; I have often sat by that very fountain, where she met the faithful servant of her father's kinsman, Abraham ; and the bracelets of gold, and armlets of silver, were respectfully clasped over the gracious hands, which had so promptly given him and his beast to drink ! But like poor Salomé, I have now little chance of seeing that spot of my

early happiness any more. However, to your next question ; how I, the wife of a crusade knight, became so long a resident in its happy shades.

“Edessa being won by the Christian sword, the redeemed people, (who, under whatever infidel rule, had always preserved the altars of the cross hidden among them,) besought Godfrey to leave one of his brothers, as their protecting sovereign. Baldwin and Eustace, both had performed the part of heroes on the walls ; and the wishes of the citizens according to their own characters, were divided between them ; for, excepting valour, their manners were different as their persons. Baldwin was of plain, but dignified exterior ; brave, scrupulously just, and beneficently bounteous. Bestowing only where real want needed, or merit deserved, his well-managed donatives never failed such expectants ; and flowed generously, within the restricted limits. Eustace, resembled him in nought but his courage ; and there, with this extreme, that it rushed over every object like a consuming fire. By it, he had been first of the train to scale, not merely the main out-works of the town, but the precipices that moated the full armed gates ; and by it he had clambered under showers of missive weapons, to the top of the great pinnacled tower, and tearing down the crescent standard, planted his spear, bannered with the cross, in its place. He stood, as I have been told, like some God there ; and the whole populace beneath, in the town, shouted in admiration of the beautifully terrific spectacle.

“ I have never seen him ; but my husband has often described him to me, as every way formed to catch the public wonder, and therefore their passions. His personal magnificence was dazzling ; and his liberality so profuse, that all other noble, yet measured benefactions, seemed niggard, beside such unnoting, overflowing largesses. And, for his figure, there was nothing seen throughout the whole crusade army, to compare with it. Like that of Absalom, it was without blemish from head to foot ; and, like Absalom, the errors of his nature were inward. I remember my husband’s very words, in lamenting this ; for he loved the Prince, and often warned him in vain ;—‘ Eustace,’ said he, ‘ had the port and the spirit of a lion to win an empire ; but in his wrath, the fury also of one, to trample it to desolation beneath his feet ; and then howl, in impotence of redress, at the waste he had made !’

“ One proof of this he gave me, as having occurred during the taking of Edessa. Eustace soon made a victorious path from the standard tower, over a bleeding mound of his vanquished enemies, towards the ark of the city, (so its great fortress is called) where the chiefs of the Mo-lem inhabitants had retreated, with their families and treasures, as a last refuge. On approaching its walls, the Prince was informed, that his brother Godfrey, who had gained the town in the opposite quarter, was at that very moment before the gate of the stronghold on the side of his own advance, negotiating terms with the garrison for an immediate surrender. Eustace, never to be withheld in the torrent of his triumphs, despised parley when conquest might compel ; and ordering red-hot balls of iron to be cast from his war-machines against the huge cedar doors, of the gate on his quarter, burst them blazing inwards ; when he was instantly passed by his headlong followers : but who soon, in conjunction with him, carried the place at every point, with a force and a fierceness nothing could control ; for the whirlwind of battle had not rushed by him a second, ere he was in the midst of it again ; sharing, what he might prompt, but could not check ; and, with sword and brand in his own grasp, was spectator of the city's riches made the plunder of his soldiers : the corn-magazines set in a pyre of flames ; and of the difficulty with which any of the garrison were spared in the full sweep of extermination.

“ By that ill-timed exploit, my husband believed the young prince lost the sovereignty of Edessa ; and yet only after the steady refusal of Godfrey to sanction such elevation ; who, as head of the whole crusade, dreaded to leave a spirit of yet so untempered a constitutional impetuosity in charge of a frontier of such importance to the Holy Land. For the greater multitude of the citizens, captivated by the first spectacle of Eustace on the standard tower, and the profusion with which he had scattered among them his share of the fortress spoil, thought they beheld, in the splendour of his person, and the astonishing achievements of his valour, a restoration to their country of another Arinthenus ; its most memorable Christian hero of pagan times. Of him, the patriarch Basil wrote in the archives of the city, as one having had strength and beauty so inimitable, the Creator seemed to have formed him in such faultless perfection, to

show what man had been in paradise ; and, that his mind, in corresponding symmetry, held so mild a rule over the country he governed, that all within its borders was peace. Without, when war attacked them, then his exploits were such, the most veritable historians appeared fabulous while relating them ; the heathens, regarding his face in the clouds of battle, as if their own Apollo, incensed, were launching his terrors on them.

“ To this hero, the populace of Edessa, compared the prince they demanded. But the graver reason of the elders of the city, was soon convinced that the young warrior before them, wanted yet many years of the well-disciplined spirit, with which Arintheus had taken the preservation of Edessa under the broad shield alike of his wisdom and his arms. The result was, Baldwin de Bouillon was nominated to the protection of the Edessaens, with the modest title of Count ; and Eustace, to whom their enthusiasm had offered the prouder recognition of king, retired from the scene of his mingled glory and disgrace, in a storm of disdainfully unuttered indignation. But which evinced itself, almost immediately afterwards, by his refusing to draw a sword in the attack of Antioch ; another essential post, in the march of Godfrey ; and full of a gloomy revenge, he remained within his line of camp, while his brave brother, assisted alone by the lately arrived knights of Calabria, and our good northern barons with the Duke of Normandy at their head, made himself master of that city also ; and having thus cleared his way to Jerusalem, he left Bahoumd of Calabria its military chief.

“ But on the walls of Jerusalem itself, that great object of the whole expedition, Eustace was again seen foremost ; wresting renown from the bristled front of every mounted breach ; and leaving a track behind him of war's boldest, direst, heart-appalling deeds. O ! I have listened, trembling, to my Baron's description of the one most horrible scene of contest, where that bright creature, like a leopard plunging at once on the spiked weapons impeding his progress, fell under wounds that laid him lifeless. De Beaufort, another northern hero, steadily brave, as his kinsman was restrainlessly daring, dropt at his side ; and the groans of their followers around them, were like each man's death agony.”

“What, he died, then?” cried Berenice, in a voice of gasping attention.

“Which, do you mean?” asked the Baroness, “Eustace, or his valiant cousin?”

“Eustace!” returned both her auditors in a breath. The serious deportment with which the Baroness was making her recital, now gave way to an arch glance,—“Ah! true human nature! the leopard with its spots!”—cried she: “But, beware damsels! ye are neither of you professed vestals yet; and, if the eye is caught, meanwhile, by any vagrant peep beyond these boundaries, you may find it a springe for heart-aches?”

“Methinks,” returned Berenice, with an answering smile, “the world is full of heart aches any way, so I shall never try its snares! But it was not the beauty of this intrepid Eustace,” added she, more seriously, “that moved my question.—Because of his faults, I pity him; and could have wished he had lived to repent them.”

“That he lived, is very certain;” rejoined the Baroness, “but whether to penitence, and consequent discretion in valour and conduct, I know not. He left Jerusalem, in a disgust with his brother, its magnanimous protector, that no one could account for; and the last I heard of him, was, his having landed on the coast of Normandy, in a fearful storm, too like his temper and his fortunes. My husband told me of all these things on his return from the deliverance of the Holy City;” continued she, after a pause, in which her meditative auditors had not offered a remark. “And while we were sitting secure and peaceful, in the little frontier fort he commanded,—our pleasant home, close by the shepherd farm of poor Salomé’s father;—How did I bless the judgment, which had bestowed the brave, but less adventurous Baldwin to be the guardian of our boundaries!”

This reference to her, whose lowly history had first induced these prouder annals of wars and princes, was followed with sufficient explanations, to acquaint both of Salomé’s now deeply interested sister recluses, with the particulars which seemed to have led to her sorrows. De Flavian, her father, had been a personal attendant on Eustace. But, on some unconscious offence, was dismissed without a reason given; and afterwards compassionately taken into the train of his brother Baldwin. When that prince be-

came Count of Edessa, de Flavian, having proved a brave and trust-worthy servant, had the pastures of the Charran frontier bestowed on him. And, in after years, when he wished to give his daughter to a faithful follower of his own, Alexis Poligne (a youth born in his house, and who had fought by his side,) he set forth on a journey, to pay his duty to his master Baldwin; then no longer resident in Edessa, but since the death of Godfrey, was become King of the Holy City; and to ask of his grace a farther grant of those lands, in reversion for his intended son-in-law, which had so long spread his own board with smiling plenty. In that journey, accompanied by his daughter and servants only, his little caravan was attacked by the predatory Arabs. He fell, but his people escaped. Salomé sent them back to Charran of Edessa, with a written renunciation for ever of her lover, and of life, connected with the world; investing him with all her little patrimony, while herself, she told him, would have found a refuge for her expiatory tears, where none who ever knew her should hear of her more.

Both Mildred and Berenice repeated their pity of such inconsolable grief, and of the gloom, rather than resignation, that seemed the consequence of her sequestration. "Such grief," replied the Baroness, "is desperation, not sorrow. The superstitious terrors that lit its passionate excess, will burn out; and, the now-rejected comfort, sought despairingly, when it may not be obtained. Poor Salomé!"

"Poor Salomé!" echoed from the lip of either sympathizing auditor; though neither of them quite understood the whole of the kind narrator's concluding remark; for neither of them guessed she could mean any source of consolation beyond their own dear walls.

The sun was fully sunk; and the moon, they had hailed on their first going out, only a white spot in the evening sky, now shed a mild but silvery brightness over the slender pinnacles of their convent's chapel, as they returned towards it. The bell for second vespers was ringing.

"Here dwells peace!" exclaimed the Baroness, putting an arm round each of her friends, while they entered beneath the cloister porch; "at least for those who never heard the tongue that promises more! Hug her to your bosoms, children; nor ever wish to wander beyond her limits. For, if a better fate than Salomé's may await most of our sex in the world; yet—I am a happy wife!—and my

husband is taken from me, to fields of danger, or to embassies of trust! on one of the latter, he is now far journeying; each, indeed, to end in honour; yet, while he is away, what comfort have I in all these things!"

"In that honour!" replied Berenice, smiling with a re-illuminated glow of her own latent character; — "Surely, the well-earned glory of a man, be he husband or father, must be the happiness of those who love him!"

The Baroness gazed at the young creature who said this simply, yet with the noble air of one who might have expressed it from a throne. The manner which accompanied its utterance, had nothing of the old echo of a taught sentiment, unfelt, because untried! it came genuine from the heart, and the speaker looked the heroic spirit she declared.

"Who can she be?" asked the Baroness, within herself, while the little party passed into the Chapel, and took their places.—She sat, she knelt, but her eyes ever turned towards Berenice; with the same question, again and again recurring to her. Every thing about the young novice, indeed proclaimed her distinction from the rest; and yet no one among them, seemed to consider her of higher rank than themselves. That she was an orphan, the Baroness understood; and it had been hinted by an old nurse-tender of the cells, that some mysterious circumstances were connected with her birth. While the Lady of Hardres sat thus occupied, gazing, and conjecturing, carried by her recently-awakened curiosity far from the duties of the place, Berenice happened to turn her head, while her raised eyes, and beautiful mouth, were engaged in the offices of the hymn she was chanting. A flash of likeness between her, and young Armand de Courtenay, nephew to the brave Earl de Beaufort, and by whose side he fell in the Holy City, struck her contemplator at once with an idea, that he might have been her father. The Baroness knew, that not long after recovering from his wounds he had disappeared for awhile out of Jerusalem; and that a secret marriage with some lovely native of the neighbouring mountains, was then suspected to be the cause.

But if the attraction really were of so sacred a character, his bride must have released him, by a timely death, from a mis-alliance he had blushed to own; for the Baroness remembered seeing him herself, within a year or two after these reports, at his brother's, Joselyne de Courtenay's, in Edessa; when he appeared a gay and happy bachelor,



dancing at every festival. "But even so!" said she to herself; "Such is man! there was time enough for all to have happened. And, though the tale told not so much, a child might have been the fruit of these summer-day nuptials; and, this be she!"

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"How many goodly creatures are there here,  
 O, brave new world,  
 That has such people in't!"

Months rolled on, and every thing in the convent resumed its usual cheerful aspect. Infancy was blithesome, age serene. For, within those walls of comfort, no measure of years were excluded from shelter. Salomé's mildly-beaming eye, now looked submission to her fate. And the filial sorrow which, for awhile, had obscured the hilarity of Berenice's, seemed also to have passed away; for it had been only a reflected sorrow; a shadow, cast, as it were from the tomb, where the real sufferer had been long at rest, and the imparted sadness gradually dissipated in youth's sanguine morn. But youth's morn is in life's day; and the sun rises not more surely from the pure and glowing ether of the dawn, than the clouds have birth, which are to chequer his brightness. Though at first they may appear on the verge of the horizon, no bigger than a man's hand, the vapours swell on, till the swiftest chariot and horses are too slow to bear the wayfarer from the plunging tempest.

At the time I now speak of, it was a season of peculiar festivity at Saint Mary's;—that of taking the honey. For the treasure of the hives, or the natural repositories of the bees in the hollows of old elms, were there amicably divided

\* Where lines like these 

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 occur in this copy, they correspond with certain breaks in the original MSS., marked by illuminated head-pieces of arabesque foliage, or appropriate emblems, all of the most curious designs and brilliant colouring. The matter of these symbols is attempted to be supplied by the selected mottoes.—At chasms in the narrative, torn away out of the old MSS., the reader will find asterisks, thus \* \* \*, in this volume.

between the industrious little creature that deposited the delicious store, and the careful hands which provided the secure bullrush hive; or protected its wilder woodland home, alike from depredation or any other accident. It was also a delightful occupation with the peasantry, to select and dispose their winged colonies in the most luxuriant spots of their gardens; or in nearest neighbourhood to the balmy herbage of the hills, and the lulling murmur of the little mountain rills, that bees love, and hum in concert with, while they ply their pleasant toil. The people of the country have a pretty legend of the loves of the bee and the fountain, in the same way the Persians talk of the fondness of the nightingale for the rose; and during this festival of the honey-gathering, sang such ballads; and the children sprinkled the new hives with water, shook from bunches of lilies; or crowned the bounteous old cells, with garlands of every flower. That done, they offered cakes to each other, made of honey and the finest barley meal; and brought the overflowing comb, with bowls of milk, in presentation to their fathers and mothers. And what the children of the land, did to their patriarchal homes, the orphans of Saint Mary's, imitated towards their adopting parents; loading their little arms with baskets of mingled flowers and honey-pots, and filling the summer parlour with an almost insupportable fragrance, while spreading their tribute before the lady Commandress, and other elders of the convent.

The youngersisters, with the social Baroness of Hardres, ever a leader in scenes of blameless merriment, were in the midst of the joyous revelry without doors; and the bees, themselves, seemed equally to enjoy their day of first-fruits; sporting like butterflies from shrub to shrub; sipping the dew-drop in the violet's cup; banqueting in the jacinth's nectareous bell; while their little abodes, refreshed, and unincumbered of half their too abundant stores, were preparing for their return. So gay they were, as if they knew by instinct, (and a just custom in the land, had made it as instinct to them,) they should find their garden hives, or their wood hollows, alike safe, and untainted by foul smell or deleterious vapour, whenever the sun set; and the timbrel of the young gatherers, sounding from under the spreading sycamore shade, should call themselves to the mirthful dance, and the little queen of sweets, to re-summon her roaming subjects to their waxen-homes.

All, indeed, partook of the same security, and season of gladness. Birds warbling from the trees, hid among the thickly-leaved branches, or hopping from spray to spray over the heads of the happy groupes beneath, seemed to share the light boundings of their hearts. Berenice, in the mirth of the moment, mingled her notes with the melodiously piercing trills of the nightingale, or joined her own soft cadence to its more melting lay; then, frolicking with the children, ran with them along the banks of the winding Tur, in chase of some favourite lamb or kid; to assist them in decorating it with chaplets like their own, while feeding from their hands, on the blossomed clover they had culled, for its taste of the day's feasting.

And, in such like innocent pleasures of the uncontaminated, contented mind, when each diurnal duty of the festive week was done, whether of study or offices of benevolence, within or without the convent; the sisterhood had continued to enjoy their peaceful existence of privileged gayety, and vestal happiness, with an answering thankfulness to the bestowing hand, when tidings were suddenly brought from the Holy City, that changed the hue of every thing.

Baldwin de Bouillon, the good, the brave king of Jerusalem was no more.

All was consternation with those, who knew the infidels were yet hidden, within and around the land, ready for insurrection or invasion! and who was to be the successor, of its late so efficient protector? He had no son, no kinsman near; and the rivalry of other chiefs, whose ambition might dim their sense of Christian disinterestedness, made all who thought on it, tremble at the consequences of any contest for the throne of Salem. The Commandress shut herself up in her oratory, for the day and night, in incessant prayer; and next morning, ordered the whole convent to be clothed in the deepest mourning. Towards evening, she sent for Berenice into her cell. When she entered to her, the venerable lady, looking pale with wo and her long vigils, feebly beckoned her young charge to approach close to her chair. Berenice reverentially obeyed; and the sorrowing Commandress, putting her hand on the head of her kneeling charge, who always so bent, in paying her duty to her protectress, exclaimed in much agitation:

“Bless thee, my child! Though the mighty are fallen,—and the last of them, to whom I looked to spread his *espe-*

cial shield over this little sanctuary, is taken from our hopes ; yet God will be the guardian of the orphan !”

Tears coursed down the cheeks of the venerable speaker ; and with her own hands folding the sackcloth vestment of lamentation, over the bended neck of Berenice, she kissed her forehead ; and bade her retire to her cell, and twice number her rosary that fatal day, for Jerusalem, and for the household to which she belonged.

This was the second time the stroke of affliction had reached Berenice ; even in those sheltering walls, making her young heart acquainted with its touch. First, in memorial of her parents, whom she could not but filially deplore, though she had never known them ; and, now, being present with the anguish of her, who had fulfilled the duties of both parents to her. So young a heart could not be expected to feel that answering pang, simply in regret of a monarch she had never seen ; and, at any rate, what had the affections, and consequent regrets of an obscure girl, shut up in the unnoticed routine of a little convent, to do with princes and royal mournings ! But she saw her best friend in serious grief ; and that was sufficient to change the buoyant alacrity, with which she always obeyed a summons to that dear presence, into all the dejection of sincere sadness ; and the sadder, because she who was the comforter of every one else, and of Berenice’s own filial sorrow too, now seemed to have asked the soothing of an ineffectual sympathy, one that could not understand her grief. With, however, an awed, as well as distressed mind, she reverentially took the cross, the trembling hand of her protectress held to her, and pressing it to her lips, retired from her presence, to obey the sacred command in the seclusion of her cell. In her silent way through the cloisters, every face she met, whether of the sisters or servants, all gliding to their separate orisons, reflected the grave sorrow of her own.

Thus, in the solemn offices of prayer for themselves, and masses for the illustrious dead ; in fasting, and the soul’s humility, passed the period of mourning ; and that included, and excluded, many an accustomed season, like that of the honey-gathering, of grateful, gratulatory participation in the various annual bounties of nature, or rather of nature’s God. The sheep-shearing, in the convent pastures ; and also the getting in of the wheat harvest ; which used to be greeted by the sisterhood, in the threshing-ground, at the

foot of the mount, towards Bethlehem. A spot, bequeathed to their order, in past ages by the benevolent Saint Jerome; and which, his records told, once belonged to the lands of Jesse. These, among the regularly returning pleasures of their simple lives, now disappointed, were what Berenice and her young companions most regretted; for all that makes pleasure to the pure and ardent mind, were there; delighted memories, walking with equally delightful imaginations; and present actual enjoyment of the sweetest converse, in the sweetest scenes of nature, with the friends of their most familiar love. But now Jerusalem was in mourning weeds, and it became no daughter of the Holy City, to rejoice, save in the silent temple of the heart.

But the time of sackcloth was fulfilled; and a new king, and guardian, to be inaugurated on the sacred hill of David. The anointing rite had already been performed; but the ceremony of the coronation, was to take place on the anniversary of the day of the deliverance of the city by the arms of Godfrey; after the new sovereign had walked his progress, in common latchet-sandals, and bare-headed, through its holy places, to his throne in the court of Solomon.

This was the very anniversary, on which, according to hope, being the eighteenth from the birth of Berenice, she had so long anticipated the hallowed gratification of being herself permitted to make a pilgrimage, which was to terminate on that evening also, with presenting to her sight, though from afar, the very temple that contained those courts; and thence, beyond, the yet more revered dome, near which the mortal part of her mother slept. The fifteenth of July was the day of Jubilee; and three days in the week preceding it, were to be occupied by the sisters of Saint Mary's, in making their happy circuit of that range of the mount, which, only once a year, any of them were privileged to ascend.

On the vigils of this doubly consecrated week, and immediately after the vesper anthem was sung, the Commandress, being yet a recluse in her own apartments, summoned the novices who were to take part in the approaching solemn festival, to attend her in her private oratory. While they obeyed, and each drew reverentially towards her, she looked up to heaven, mentally saying, "Forgive, Lord, that I have murmured for one of these! Thy kingdom is indeed not of this world, and it is the lowly in heart that

shall see thy face!" With this aspiration, a faint glow of the holy confidence within, gently illumed the pale serenity of her countenance; and when the little circle had taken their seats before her, she thus addressed them.

"My children; to-morrow you commence the blessed pilgrimage, that leads to beholding, for the first time in your lives, the sacred walls of Jerusalem. Another pious rite will then be also performed, which I have twice witnessed. O! the sacred rapture of the first!—the second, it was chastened joy;—but now, sickness holds me from sharing the orisons of the present dispensation. You will see, moving along the valley of Jehosaphat, which divides this mount from that of our heaven-protected Sion, the procession of its new king, making his progress of reverence to the holy places; but ere you go forth to look on all this, it is meet that the daughters of this house, should regard these objects with deeper knowledge, than belongs to mere historical curiosity, or admiration of a gorgeous spectacle.

"Young as ye are, ye need not be reminded of the brief time that has elapsed, since the first pious crusaders landed in desolated Palestine; rescued it from the captivity of the infidels, and made it your home and mine. Hardly more than nineteen years have gone by, since that day; and yet, my children, most of you may call that the hitherto expanse of your lives. Most of you were born in this land; and under the tents of brave, though unbannered fathers, now sleeping by their chiefs, in the graves of glory, for which they fought, and won."

Some of her audience wept,—those who had seen the parents they were now so tenderly invited to remember. The Commandress continued,—

"It would ill become a Christian instructress to inculcate veneration for an ambitious warfare. Like its object, it is all earthly; and its end must be the same,—dust to dust. But it was no vain glory that brought your fathers to the field of Palestine; it was to succour and to save. The country which had been the cradle of their faith was known to be under oppression, and in misery. The cry was like that of a mother, calling on her more prosperous children in distant lands, to rally to the rescue of their parent and less fortunate brethren; and the appeal was nobly answered. But ye are now to hear the record of those claims; the evils of the country, whose history belongs to every man

who has been, or shall be, born into the world. In brief recital, I shall tell it you, though it will include much. First, the peaceful triumphs, and consequent happiness, of the professors of our holy faith, within a century of its divine revelation from bleeding Calvary. Then, how the false religion of the impostor of Mecca, arose in the deserts of Arabia; and its two nations of misled proselytes, the Saracens from the south, and the more barbarian Turks from the north, overwhelmed this land, and trampled it into wretchedness. When your hearts have borne that sad narrative, then come I to the blessed details of the redeeming Christian arms; led on by the best and bravest of our western brethren, to turn our tears into gladness. Hence, my children, bow down your souls before Him, who preserved and restored; and listen with awe and gratitude.

“It was about the close of the first century that the Christians of Antioch gave shelter to a young damsel of the adjacent country; her sordid parents having devoted her to the heathen rites of the groves of Daphne near the city. At that time Jerusalem—

\* \* \* \* \*

[Here commence the gaps in the narrative, where the leaves were torn away in the original manuscript. Many pages must have been lost at this place, from the evidently very wide chasm between the beginning of the abbreviated history, and the circumstance which next presents itself, in continuation of the discourse.]

\* \* \* \* \*

“But all which the truly great Constantine, and those of his successors who deserved the imperial diadem, had done during so many hundred years, for the peace of the Holy Land, was again disturbed by another order of infidels, than Pagans; and the corrupted passions of men, abetting the fierceness of the ambition, which had vanquished and overwhelmed them, even from the Caspian to the Euxine, and thence from the Mediterranean to the Great Sea; when the weight of such a barbarian host, fell on Judea also, then was the shock to Christendom, as if an earthquake had buried it from sight. And better had it been so; for it was more tolerable to the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the dark abyss which engulfed their cities, than were the sufferings which awaited the conquered natives of the land.”—

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[Here occurs a yet wider rent in the MSS., and then we find the Commandress resuming.]

“—Godfrey’s spirit seemed diffused through the breast of every soldier in his army; his magnanimous, determined spirit! And he stood, dictating, like an archangel from the battlement top, with his bright sword shining in the sun, between the two towers of the Bethlehem gate, over whose infidel hosts he had made the first breach into the city.—Prince Eustace, with his brave kinsmen the Courtenays, twins in virtue as in birth; and Duke Robert of Normandy and England, gained the walls in every other quarter. Yes! the Lord of victory had delivered Jerusalem into their hands; and O the cry of joy that was in that hour! Multitudes were saved, even in the moment of pending destruction, from the maddened vengeance of the despairing Turk. The foully insulted Christians, and the tortured Jews—some tied to the stake, others hauled to the brink of the horrible receptacle for the city’s ashes—beheld themselves thus released, as by miracle, even when the arms of their enemies were extended to light the faggots of martyrdom, or to thrust them headlong into the fathomless, suffocating pit. What thanksgivings were then poured forth from every rescued victim! What from their captive families, outraged to the soul, when they crept from their dens of misery at the sound of the Christian trumpet, and met the eager embrace of sons, fathers, husbands, thus restored to them as from the grave! And what was the general invocation of blessings on the heads of Godfrey and his invincible heroes! Invincible in the might which had unctioned the sword of Joshua, of Gideon, and the Maccabees. For even the noble knights who fell, died in the bed of triumph; and their lofty names, emblazoned in golden characters, every archive in the land registers with gratitude.”

At this remark, Berenice remembered the distinction, a former conference in that cell, had pointed out between her parentage, and those of the young orphans about her; and the present discourse, at its beginning having again noted their birth from obscure though gallant fathers, she now felt a proud glow, (the only time she ever was conscious to such an emotion,) in the idea that most likely her father’s



name, of some illustrious house, stood brightly eminent in this heroic calendar. Her glance might have told her thoughts to the Commandress, had she met it ; but, wholly bound up in the interest of her narrative, the venerable lady sought no eye in particular, while continuing her details thus :

“ Godfrey, with an unanimous voice, was proclaimed king of Sion. But he put the offered crown, from him, saying, ‘ There was only one king of that ever sacred name ! But if he must have a title distinct from his fellows in Jerusalem, let it be that of Guardian of the Holy Sepulchre ! ’ By that modest appellation, he was indeed recognised, not only as guardian of the sepulchre, but of the city, and of all the hallowed places within and without it. On the evening of that day he was proclaimed its deliverer, from the great pinnacle of the Temple, and from the summit of every hill around the valleys of Jerusalem ; and it is to commemorate this deliverance, and this promulgation, that to-morrow you begin the pilgrimage of our mount ; so often trod by the divine steps, which doubly sanctified the holiness of Jerusalem. And on the third day from this which will be the anniversary of its rescue, you will kneel down at the foot of the great stone-cross on the summit of Olivet, where the herald of Godfrey announced the glad tidings ; and there pray for the souls of your fathers, and other kindred, who, on that memorable day, eighteen years ago, laid down their mortal bodies in the gap of victory ; trusting to a happy resurrection, from the mercy and promise of their prince and Saviour ! ”

“ My daughters,” continued the Commandress after a few minutes’ solemn pause, in which her attentive auditors seemed, like herself, communing with their own hearts ; “ daughters of a better parent than earth can afford ! draw towards me.” They obeyed, and she held to each, a black rosary. “ Receive,” said she, “ the chaplets that have been brought from the shrine of the Holy Sepulchre, for you. The name of your departed kinsman, depending from each little cross, has been blessed by the patriarch ; meaning by so leading your pious orisons, still to link the human affections with the happy dead ; they whose perfected spirits, are made ministering angels to the just below ! ”

She rose, while pronouncing the concluding words ; and each sister, according to her age receiving the sacred gift,

kissed the hand that presented it, and then, one after the other, reverentially withdrew. Berenice, being the youngest of the party, found herself alone with her protectress, and, supposing the remaining rosary must be intended for her, she approached also. The devout awe she felt, was fully apparent in the bowed down action of her head, and the position of her hands, crossed over her breast as if all within were already entirely consecrated to heaven. The reverend lady gently laid her hand on that beautiful head, she now believed for ever devoted to the veil.

“My child,” resumed she, “the next three days, will show you the holy objects of your long aspirations; and before each, your pious heart will find its share, with those other dear orphans of my charge, in the balsam of your mingling prayers. On the morning after these duties are completed, the sealed coffer from your mother will be delivered to you; and there, I doubt not, you will meet some explanation of what may be your connexion with those prayers for the sainted brave. Oh, Berenice!” abruptly added the Commandress, after a moment’s agitated hesitation; “Mysterious hopes for you, seem to have dragged my spirit, over anxiously, from its cloistered rest; and the tribulations of that world, I had vowed to think no more of, have deservedly fallen on me. Year after year these hopes beset me, and now there is a crisis,—but every hour passing silently away, in the quarter whence I had expected some voice to speak, were it even from the tomb, to explain before this day—what, assuredly, that casket will at length reveal—has left me in redoubling difficulties. Yet I do not regret preserving inviolate the vow I pledged, that no hand should touch that seal till your own appointed hour. Therefore, my child, take the rosary even as it is. As there was no name attached to it, it has received no blessing.”

“No blessing! Oh, my more than mother!” exclaimed Berenice, putting the sacred beads, with an appalled action, from her. The Commandress read in her expressive countenance, the religious dread to which she had not given more words; and, with deepened tenderness, conjured her not to start at a ceremonial accident, as if it were designed omission, and therefore an excommunication: for by what name, could she have sent to the patriarch, for his benediction on the memory attached to that rosary? Again she exhorted her to receive it; and with a confidence, that the

Father of the fatherless, who knew his servant, would shed his own blessing on it. Berenice took the little uninscribed chaplet reverentially, but tremblingly, and pressed it to her lips. She did not speak, but moved as if to follow her companions. The Commandress saw, that excited apprehension of some malediction, resting on her parents or herself, had taken possession of her mind ; and anxious to rally her thoughts from the danger of visionary alarms, to the safer contemplation of realities, however trying, resolved to communicate now to her, all that she could recal to recollection of those parents. With, therefore, the same soothing touch of her venerable hand, she pressed Berenice down again into the chair she had quitted ; and bidding her compose herself till she rejoined her, retired for a few minutes of similar tranquillizing seclusion, within the shrine doors of her oratory.

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“—————Nay, weep not !  
 'Tis a testament of nobly-ending love,  
 Espousing death, as infants turn to slumber  
 In their mother's arms.—————”

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When the Commandress re-entered the cell, she found her charge, as she had been earnestly praying she might be, sitting resignedly serene, though pale indeed, just where she had left her. No hat, or veil, cast their shadows over her face ; and her long waving tresses, fallen over her shoulders, were parted quite away also.—The soft rays of the lamp hanging from the narrow vaulted roof, shone direct on her polished forehead, as if the moon's light rested there ; while her clasped hands held the rosary lying on her knee, on which she gazed ;—but it was in meditation.

At sight of her so seated, the fondly regretful, adopted parent, stopped an instant, in her advance, to contemplate that most perfect form of youthful loveliness ; and with all the throb that might have filled a real mother's breast, she looked upon her ; then with a sigh her vestal bosom could not check, calmly approached. Berenice's hand was soon pressed in hers, while, with that balmy assuasiveness which woman's nature ever gives to the graver tones of her discourse, whether of counsel or of consolation, the gentle

monitress candidly told her pupil ;—that, however she might be infringing the strict reserve, that had been enjoined her to maintain, till the opening of the casket, or the fulfilment of other expectations, should do all reserve away ; still, under the present circumstances, she had considered that she owed no less a duty to the filial feelings of the child, agitated by suspense at so sacred a season, than that which she had so long preserved towards the dying wish of the mother. Indeed, to the injunction of the father too. For the Commandress now owned, that she had seen him also. It may easily be imagined, the animated, eager questions, which followed this acknowledgment, from his before pensively listening daughter. The shadowy calmness of her eyes, vanished in flashing brightness, while they turned on the speaker ; re-illuminating, at every hurried interrogatory, with all the reawakening dreams which had so often emparadised her thoughts of recognition by him ; or of at least dwelling with devout rapture on the heroic glories of his memory.

The Commandress trembled at the vividness of such a sensibility ; lit by an imagination, she had little suspected in her young charge, during her equable days of study, and simple recreations ; when to live only, seemed bliss, and she thought not of from whom she had sprung. But the spark once dropt, on the mine of feeling within that breast, it might sometimes fade and smoulder in its ashes, but now it seemed ready to break into a blaze. The considerate nun therefore felt she must manage with peculiar tenderness the hopes and fears she had herself, though undesignedly, kindled in so affectionate and noble a heart ; and, with a soothing frankness now in her manner, she replied to every anxious question, as far as her knowledge reached.

“ But,” observed she, “ who your father was, I must confess to you, I have yet to guess. His mien, as well as your mother’s, proclaimed their nobility. I never shall forget either ; nor the impression their first appearance made on every creature in this house. Alas ! it was a memorable time in other respects. The brave and beneficent Godfrey, I may say like Moses on mount Nebo, had just expired in full view of the land whose sabbath his arm had won. He died, ere he completed the one year of his truly patriarchal rule. And, on the morning of the day appointed for the synod in the temple, where the chiefs were to

assemble to proclaim his successor ; and while we were even engaged at our matin prayers, for wisdom to direct them in a choice so momentous to all our safeties, a message was wispered to me, that a case of extremity needed my presence without. In short, a litter of rather an extraordinary appearance, and bearing a sick person, had stopped at the convent gate ; where its conductor demanded hospitality, he said, from a place he understood to be an adjunct cell of the House of Saint John's at Jerusalem.

“ The plea was just, and I went forth to the gate. The hangings, which canopied the closely covered litter, were indeed of great richness ; and the harness on the mules, of an equal splendour, and only usual in equipages of state ; but its sole attendance, excepting the two drivers, (and they were in the commonest garbs of the country,) seemed comprised in one man. His port, however, was sufficiently striking, had he not even spoke, to have declared him a knight of quality ; though the large dark folds of his mantle were so wrapped round his person, that no glimpse, either of his interior dress, or of his face, could be discerned. At sight of me, whose raiment immediately announced my station in the convent, he came respectfully, yet loftily forward, and requested my assistance for a lady in that litter, his wife, who had been suddenly taken ill in their journey, even to the peril of her life. I allowed him hardly to finish speaking, ere the gate was opened to receive the litter. And as soon as the mules which bare it, were driven within the court, he took the men aside, paid and dismissed them, the machine and the animals being left with us. The instant the portals were closed on the men, the cavalier then led me to the side of the litter, and raised its curtain. A beautiful young woman lay there, already of the hue of death, from her state of silent suffering under the fast increasing pangs of a premature childbirth.”

“ Oh ! my mother ! ” ejaculated the breathlessly attentive Berenice, throwing herself on the breast of the Commandress, and bursting into a passion of tears. “ It was,” returned the good lady. And, as soon as the agitated daughter had recomposed herself, to listen again, without further interruption from her then relieved heart, the Commandress proceeded to tell her, that no time was lost in providing an apartment for the invalid. “ And, in the very room, which is now your cell,” continued she, “ were you born. But

not until the following day. For the distress of her journey, had not only hastened the awful hour of pain, but protracted its termination. All, however, I could learn respecting this journey, or of themselves, from her noble companion, —(for, when his cloak was thrown off in her antechamber while watching during the severity of her pangs, I then distinctly saw, by the martial dignity of his figure and countenance, that he must be noble!) was, that while travelling to Jerusalem to take part as a knight in the ensuing election, —for he dwelt at some distance,—his lady had been thus prematurely seized; and hearing of our convent's proximity, he had brought her to its care during the event; and for which, he would not fail to amply remunerate its hospitality: but, he added, that evening he must leave her to our entire charge; being obliged to proceed himself to the Holy City, to meet the great business there, that might extend through the night, and possibly the next day.

“I was present when he embraced your mother, during an interval of her pains, just as he was about to quit her; and, being near her bed, I could not help hearing his whispered farewell, while she clung, weeping, round his neck. —‘Beloved,’ said he, ‘give me but a boy—and he shall repay us both for all this misery!’—‘As Heaven pleaseth!’ was the faint, half-breathed reply of your mother, sinking back into my arms; while her husband, with a countenance in which a thousand feelings of anxiety were pourtrayed, and one of joyful expectation was among them, pressed her hand to his lips, and then hurried from the room. In the antechamber he found the matron standing, who had been brought from the nearest village to attend his lady’s travail, and who had only left her side till he had taken his leave. At sight of her, he put a rich ring from his finger upon her’s; and, while the big drops of emotion started on his forehead, he exclaimed,—“Watch over the safety of that lady, as you would your life; and the birth of the son you may this night bring into the world, shall be a fortune to you and yours!” With these words he hastened away—and the hours, with their events, passed anxiously with us; while the sweetest hopes seemed hovering over your mother, from recollection of the brightening glance with which he had parted from her.

“But when he came back, his aspect was altered; a gloomy, self-centered haughtiness, appeared to have dis-

placed the diffusive, animating lustre of the anticipations with which he had left us. This struck me, as I hastened to meet him, to tell him he was a father, and that his wife was safe. 'And, my boy,' cried he, his eyes on fire with all their wonted spirit again. 'Your girl,' I replied, 'is lovely, like its mother.' O, my child, an heir male must have been of great moment to your father, for his exclamation of disappointment was terrific! such words had never greeted blessing in this roof before. I think I hear them now!" and the Commandress trembling, having in this part of her avowal forgotten who was her auditor, paused, and put her hand to her forehead in awful recollections.

Berenice felt a second blow on her heart. Her brain began to swim. "What!" cried she. "Then I am to be an excommunicated wretch! my father denounced me at my birth!—Oh, my benefactress, in spite of yourself, you have twice uttered the doomed curse upon me!"

The venerable lady looked up, distressed at what she had indeed undesignedly betrayed. But her Christian tuition had been too sound, to allow any taint of the dregs of paganism still in the land, to contaminate her dependence on the pure decrees of Providence. A regard to omens, or maledictory influences, was one of these remains of heathen superstitions; and, as such, she remonstrated with her now sorely afflicted pupil, against augmenting the evil of real trials, by phantom interpretations of words or actions. She then represented the violent exclamation of Berenice's father, as merely the impulse of a fiery spirit, unaccustomed to disappointment or control; and that, when the impatient recoil from any such discipline, necessary to even the best of men, had once burst forth, it seemed to have exhausted itself; and his heart returned to its saner feelings, with a proportioned intensity of sensibility. His amiable child received this sincere apology for her parent, with no small degree of gladness and relief. For though her world-unacquainted mind held a creed of virtues too high, to at all excuse the vice she abhorred, for the sake of any affinity with the supposed offender, yet her ingenuous repugnance to thinking ill of others, was ever eager to admit the fairest light on every human character; and the elastic temperament of her youthful heart, equally grasping at as fair views of things, a happy faith in goodness, and in good, might be called the star of her bosom. The Commandress's ex-

planation had just removed a transient cloud, and again its soft beams spread the blanched cheek with its accustomed bloomy light.

With greater circumspection, however, in the wording of her narrative, the venerable Paula communicated what remained; and Berenice attended to all, with a determined curb on the expression of her responsive feelings. Her anxious protectress now gave what she had to say, very succinctly; and she resumed, with mentioning, that during the first week after the arrival of these mysterious personages, (for that there was an inexplicable mystery about them, she was obliged to allow,) the cavalier made his nightly sojourn in the convent; and every morning left it at an early hour, after having seen his wife and infant. Whither he went, the Commandress could only conjecture; neither himself, nor his lady, ever dropping a word on the subject; and it was a rule with the order of hospitalers, never to question a guest on any obviously withheld information: and every thing about the cavalier particularly showed he wished no observation to be made on him. He went out, and came back, always alone, and closely wrapped in his mantle; but his times of return each evening were at various hours; and his moods too often seemed similarly uncertain. The Commandress became aware of this; for, though he usually passed through the cloisters, direct to his lady's apartment without paying the previous respect common with the convent guests, of calling at their hostess's door, she had only to look on the meek invalid's countenance when entering her room after the cavalier had quitted it for his own chamber, to judge at once of the painfulness or pleasantness of the communications he had been making; or, perhaps, of only the impassioned overbearingness of his humour, when something deeper, he would not reveal, was at storm in his breast.

But of such humours, or their vainly-hidden effects on the weakened frame of the uncomplaining wife, the fondly-cherishing young mother;—so young, that she was then hardly the age at which her child was now hearkening to her story;—nothing was repeated that could create any new alarm to that reverentially-attentive ear, or rather heart, where every syllable was registering. But while thus reserved, the narratress felt obliged to say, that the cavalier seemed to be frequently under an anxiety, which often dis-



turbed the peace of his lady, and finally hurried him away on some far-distant journey. On the day of his departure, he held a long private conference with her in her cell. It was still, as the profound grief awakened there; no sound interrupting the noiseless communication, of the hard necessity that must have compelled that separation—the last, clinging farewell exchanged there—excepting at intervals, the crying of the babe; sharing, so early, the sorrows of its parents. Those piteous infantine plaints, its sympathizing future protectress could hear, even through the thick wall that divided her apartment from that of her guest.

The parting over, the cavalier entered the Commandress's parlour. Strong emotions were visible in every feature:—one side of the collar of his cloak was wet through. The venerable nun easily guessed whose tears had done it. Never had she seen that tender tribute of humbled humanity, to its own helplessness dimming the proud lustre of his resplendent eyes. He suffered, it was true, but like a man in a conflict; his harness on, to subdue, not bewail. His address to her was short;—thanking her, for her past hospitality; and conjuring her to take the most watchful care of his wife and child, till she should see him again; for he was going to a very far country, on a business of the greatest concern to them all. He then laid a bag of gold on the table, impressively adding, that—“the sacred community which sheltered objects so dear to him, might be assured that bag of gold should never draw near its emptying, before they should find it replaced by another.” The Commandress of Saint Mary's needed not this liberal donation, to move her to answer every adjuration with the pledges of protection our laws enjoined, and indeed with every comforting her own benevolence inspired. The cavalier took his leave, and she saw him no more.

Days, weeks, succeeded; and the lovely lone one, (now known in the convent by the name of the Lady Santa; Santa Berenice, having been the mode in which her husband always addressed her;) passed most of her solitary hours in tearful lamentations of his departure. But when the weeks shaped themselves into months, then she began to brighten into smiles; to walk out, with her babe in her arms, and enjoy the opening season; for she calculated he must be on his return. But months followed months, and—

neither the cavalier, nor intelligence from him, arrived. His lady, at last, became in such a state of terrors respecting him, that she meditated going to Jerusalem, as the only resource likely to afford her information of his fate. She did not actually say to whom she meant to apply; but the Commandress gathered sufficient, to comprehend that the distraction of her suspense would finally, if not appeased, carry her to the feet of the royal Baldwin; who, as head of all the crusade knights, as well as king of the Holy City, might reasonably be supposed to know whether death or captivity had befallen any of its enrolled defenders. But if those were the intentions of the Lady Santa, she was timely relieved from the distressing publicity of such an inquiry, by the appearance of a messenger from her husband. This man, a veteran soldier, delivered a letter to the weeping, agitated wife; also the promised replenishing bag of gold to the Commandress; and, when he had received the due acknowledgement from her, and a large full-written packet from the lady, he kissed the hand of the infant Berenice, she took from its sleep to show him, and departed on his steps without delay.

From that time, the fond wife's agony of fears, being set at rest with regard to her husband's life or liberty, she appeared to submit with the required patience, to a prolonged separation. Her smiles returned, though like gleams in a wintry sky. She spoke, indeed, cheerfully; but often closing the apparently-contented sentence with a heavy sigh. And when she supposed herself alone, or rather mused till she forgot the presence of any one, while cradling her babe on her knee, the Commandress frequently heard her talking to it in a low voice; and then she could distinguish the names Baldwin, Beaufort, Courtenay! The two former were most often repeated; but the first, generally, in a tone of reproach. Once, indeed, the unintentional listener clearly heard, in this murmured kind of plaint over the child, the following words:—"Oh! might he but see thee thus; could the royal pride, in that once noble breast, continue to shut thee from it!"—then she paused, or rather muttered something lower; and, presently, the sounds became more audible:—"if generous, like thy lion-hearted brothers—dead, and living,—" and there the voice dropped again into indistinctness; and her face, bending to the head of the little nursing in her bosom, a mother's balsmy kisses closed the sentence.

From soliloquies of this kind, our lady Paula became possessed with an idea, that her guest must be some way related to the princely family of Bouillon; now doubly aggrandized, since Baldwin had assumed the regal title, his more magnanimous brother Godfrey had piously refused: but whether she were of kin to him, by her own lineage, or that of her husband, events only, could satisfy conjecture. The Commandress certainly saw in the superb jewels of the young wife, when occasionally opening her cabinet, ample argument of an opulent, if not illustrious connexion; but her own manners appeared too simple in their native grace, to have had any thing to do with cities, camps, or courts. Her lord, on the contrary, bore about him every trait of having been intimate with all. He, then, must be the kinsman of Baldwin; and if so, probably one of the gallant Courtenays. Their mother was well known to have been the niece of the old Duke of Lorraine, chief of the house, of which these now royal de Bouillons were only younger branches also. But I have said, the long forsaken wife had more than once apostrophised the name of Courtenay. Sometimes, indeed, in prayer before the altar, on certain days she gave to fasting; and then it seemed to burst from some sudden pang at heart, being usually accompanied by tears and wringing hands, or a more intense earnestness in numbering her penitentiary beads. But the more her protectress became self-convinced of the probable truth of her suspicion, with a more scrupulous care she avoided hinting at a name, her unhappy guest seemed unconscious of having even breathed, beyond the whisper in her heart. When she spoke of her husband, it was never by any other appellation, than "my husband," or "my lord."

But this husband of her hopes, this lord of her early sorrows, appeared under a destiny never to behold her more. First one letter, and then another, was put into her expecting hand; not with the glad tidings of his near approach, but postponing, from successive cruel necessities, the period of his return; till at last, wearied anticipation sunk. The nerves of a delicate, and overstrained fabric, gave way; and her heart, worn out by constantly cherished, constantly blighted hope, lost its power of restoring the aliment of life; and, even like the evening withered flower, the sweet lily of Sharon, (with which in morning freshness, her child's young attendant daily decked the chamber's little altar)—

this lovely victim of "an equal beauty, to be desired, when looked on!" and, as untimely gathered, bowed her young head, and died.

Berenice sat, mutely listening; but with many stealing tears, during the latter circumstances of this narrative. In the former part, though the names of Courtenay, or of Beaufort, were not particularly dwelt upon by the now cautious speaker, in a way she thought likely to impress her auditor, with similar ideas to her own, yet enough did escape her, to once or twice excite a throbbing wish for more; which, if followed up by the inquiries of her pupil, might have pointed to one or other of those noble crusaders, as the author of her being. But Berenice, self-restrained, rather consigned to solitary meditation alone, even what her protectress did allow herself to acknowledge, ere she closed her communications. Which was that till within the few preceding weeks, she really had supposed some bond of affinity must exist between her charge, and the lineage of Bouillon; for while her dying guest was binding up the letters of her husband, along with the paper she had written to her then unconscious child; while she was doing this, she solemnly addressed the Commandress.

"Dangers," said she, "beset my husband. My timid nature, was not formed to be the mate of a hero—and the Lord of pity, takes my unmatched spirit, to His peace. It has paid a penalty, and a purer ransom will do the rest! But the father of my child may yet return to her. If not, the grave will then be his pillow too! and some demand in her behalf, in form of guardianship at least, may be made from the king of Jerusalem. For," added the expiring parent, with an interrupting, convulsive sigh, more of mental anguish than of mortal pangs;—"if the proud heart, have no ruth, even then my hopeless girl will still have the right of every other orphan of the crusade;—to look to its chief for protection, when the soldiers of the cross, their fathers, are no more! But should death, be all she ever hears of him who gave her life; and total neglect be her lot, where else alone she has any earthly claim;—then on her eighteenth birthday, (the age at which I brought her into this world of wo!) deliver to her that casket, with these papers; and when she opens it, and reads its contents—if she does not choose a spouse in heaven—her mother's sorrows, will have bled afresh over those papers, in vain!"

And then she blessed her child, as a mother—as a saint, would bless her last bond to earth—and, expired.

When the Commandress ceased, Berenice drew her hand, again and again, across her face, vainly wiping away the streaming showers which fell incessantly, though without a sob, from her overflowing eyes. The fountains of her heart seemed opened; and who could check them? She struggled to collect voice, to make some rejoinder to the mournful pause of her benefactress; but at last when she did force an utterance, it was only a very few words—“I conclude,” faltered she, “that my father has died the death of the brave. But the King of Jerusalem—Baldwin, he so revered!—his kinsman, doubtless!—Did he, during seventeen years, take no notice of my existence?”

The Commandress replied, that for most of that time it was not needed.—Regularly once in three years after the Lady Santa’s death, some person came by night to the convent-gate, unseen of any one; and depositing on the trap-spring of the alms-chest in the wicket, a heavy bag of gold, labelled, “For Berenice, from her father,” disappeared again. Paula, who kept the key of the chest, always drew forth its stores alone; and when she found the triennial treasure for her young charge, it ever excited a spring of joy in her venerable breast; not the joy of the usurer, but delight at the assurance in its address, that Berenice yet possessed a parent living. But, the good lady added, when three, and four, and five months, passed away beyond the usual period of the donation, and none arrived, (which was the case, some time before King Baldwin’s death,) her apprehensions pointed to the again contentious fields of Egypt; where many of the crusade veterans had recently fallen, some of whose names she had heard the Lady Santa murmur in her abstracted moods. Hourly then, the Commandress acknowledged, she looked towards Jerusalem, for some messenger from its beneficent sovereign, to proclaim a kinsman’s or a patron’s care over the fatherless Berenice. And such were her too proud expectations, she confessed, when the herald, with his black pall, asked admittance to her presence. “But,” said she, “he brought sackcloth, for my presumption; the church’s tidings to my convent, that the second guardian of the Holy City was no more!”

Though stricken at heart for the land, and for all under her charge, our reverend mother yet felt the most poignant

nantly at the instant, for the nameless orphan, in whose bosom she was conscious to having awakened many visions, of a splendid world likely to be her lot ;—and now, perhaps, too certainly blasted. Still, however, clinging to hope, she had closed herself within her own apartments, anxiously awaiting some cheering summons thence, from the opening of the royal will. But that done, and no notice having been found there of the orphan of Saint Mary's, though the munificent monarch had expressly bequeathed legacies to all his known kindred, proportioning them variously from the nearest to the most distant affinities ;—the Commandress began to heavily arraign herself, for having in a manner falsified her own vows of abjuring the vanities of the world, by indulging romantic dreams for the possible aggrandising destiny of her best beloved pupil there :—and hence believing, that whatever apparently just grounds had existed, to awaken or sanction such hopes, they either had been utterly mistaken ; or were buried deep, and mysteriously, for ever in the silence of the grave.

Pierced with this pious and affectionate remorse, she acknowledged with saint-like contrition, her error to her young charge. Telling her, with tears dimming her once venerable eyes, that she had collected together for her sole use, the residue of all the several donations from her father, once intended for the convent at large ; but which, as circumstances had changed, ought to be her restored property ; and with care, would be amply sufficient to endow, as a nun, his now orphan indeed !

“ And so let it be !—dearest consoler of my beloved, broken-hearted mother, now at peace !” cried Berenice, her tears no longer flowing ; for the flood had unburthened the full bosom, and the calmness of innocence was resettling there ; and folding her arms round her protectress, she gently added, “ Do not weep for me ! or, rather, for the world I never saw, nor can I wish to see !—I never knew another home than this ; and, while heaven grants it to me, and with your love, I have yet a parent—I am rich—I am happy !”

With the words, even a bright smile sparkled from her lips and eyes ; and, kissing the hand of the self-reconciled Commandress, who emphatically blessed her, she took the before rejected rosary from the table, on which it lay ; and putting it over her neck, again bent her fair forehead to

the repeated benedictions ; and retired, for the night's needed repose, to the solitude of her own little dormitory.

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“ So rest the Innocence, so wake in peace ! ”

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Never, surely, did morning break more beautifully, from the eastern canopy of heaven, than did that of the long anticipated July, of Berenice's eighteenth year ; a year afterward so memorable to many in the convent ; and she met it, bright as that morning's self. The agitations and tears of the evening before, had been soothed, first by prayer, and then by sleep ; and, when she woke, they were passed away, even like the vapours of a receding dream ; leaving heavenward memories alone, of those honoured beings, whom she had never been conscious to know on earth, but whom her firm belief assured her of rejoining in the eternal world. Thus, the peace of piety was given to her heart ; and the only yearning of her wishes, again pointed to the moment just at hand of beholding the places, rendered interesting to her by her early studies, and sacred from the divinity which had once stirred within them. That day, she was to behold them ! and she sprang from her couch, with the joy of a young fawn.

Matins were performed in the chapel ; and the convent gates opened to the pilgrim train. The rising sun just blushed the morning's dawn over the silvery tops of the circumjacent wooded heights ; and a balmy air breathed over every shrub and flower. The novices, all robed in the appropriate dress of the order, with long white veils, but thrown back from their faces, and with palms in their hands, issued from the portals. Berenice, being the youngest, was to lead the sister group ; and it parted, right and left, giving her way, as she passed from receiving her palm-branch also ; and with a meek, but happy spirit, moved towards her station at the head of the little train. She stepped forth on the glittering green sward. The morning-star, yet lingered in the heavens ; holding its bright lamp, like a radiant censer over the valley of

Bethlehem; and never perhaps, but once, did a more lovely female form meet its pure rays. Berenice looked towards that Bethlehem star. It imaged to her mind the scene over which that resplendent messenger, or one like unto it, had shed its guiding beam direct on the lowly vale; then, as now, lying in a divine repose, under the departing shadows of Mount Sion!

All that in such a moment filled the soul-battered bosom of Berenice, shone in her upraised countenance; and seeming to the sisterhood around, even as one of the angelic host, who had once watched and ministered where that star pointed: they stood reverentially at a distance, gazing on her with a fixed admiration.

And there was another eye, that of a stranger, which also looked on her, and with a like admiring wonder.—“Who may she be?” His quickened heart chilled in its pulses, while asking himself the question. He drew behind the natural screen of a thick grove, which topped a high bank commanding the line of pathway from the gate, and watched the procession as it passed. There was a demure formality in the step of all, excepting Berenice; most, combining notions of a necessary ceremony with the feelings of devotion; but she, wholly given up to that sentiment alone, calm, yet rapturous, seemed to tread in air; and the light, unstudied movements of her beautiful form, were full of a consequent unconscious grace. A gentle breeze wafted her veil partially from before her face, and mixing her long bright tresses with its floating folds,—she turned, to gather them from the catching sprays of some overshooting branches, bending from the bank on which the stranger stood. The apparition that then opened to his sight, and apparently so near him, seemed for a moment to unearth him. She moved on.

“Was Jephthah’s daughter fairer, lovelier?” cried he, in a burst of internal transport. Then after a few minutes’ pause, the procession being lost among the windings of its mountain track, he descended from the spot whence he had observed it, exultingly exclaiming in a smothered voice to himself: “It cannot be, otherwise. Gerrand has not deceived me; and the miserable hour of her birth may yet be that of my triumph!”

With the last ejaculation he sprung from the thicket, on to the open glade before the convent; hastened to the



porch, and rang the little bell of its wicket. The answering portress soon conducted him to the presence he required. As a palmer from the East, he demanded a private conference with the Commandress. Our venerable lady rose to meet him. He addressed her instantly by name. Eighteen years had passed lightly over the head of a retired, yet benevolently employed woman; leaving no traces on her then, and always, serene countenance, save those of a more profound peace; a more elevated consciousness that all was right within; and of the fitting of her brow for the crown of righteousness, moulding above for the lowly in spirit alone. But on his!—the cavalier who had entered that chamber eighteen summers ago—himself, not having then seen thirty years; and clothed as brightly in personal comeliness as in the unsullied splendour of his knightly armour; (his mantle never concealing its ruby-enamelled red cross, and hauberk of glittering steel, when in that room :)—he was a man, tossed on the cares, the high contending toils of life; and the marks were on him. On his face, time had not omitted a type in the catalogue. The lofty open brow was furrowed deep; the lines of the mouth, on whose lips love had once so smilingly hung, now told the inexorable firmness of an imperious will. But the ever commanding eye, though something dimmed from its first effulgence! when it again turned to her he now addressed, she felt could still vary its expressions, with all the impassioned tenderness of soul-devoted recollections; with all the impetuous self-felicitations, of possessing a present good.

Every change of the kind, the surprised and strongly-agitated Paula witnessed in the features and demeanour of this most unexpected visiter, within the short space of his avowing himself to be the husband of the lady, committed to her care eighteen years ago; and the father of the female child, the death of its young mother had so long left to an only parent's charge. "Time," he said, "would explain why that charge had not been personally assumed before; but the loss of his usual confidential messenger to the convent must account for the non-appearance of the last due deposit of gold." And then he eagerly inquired, whether the damsel he had just seen leading the group up the mount, were his daughter or not. The reply was in the affirmative; but the immediate declaration from the protectress' full heart, that with all her mother's beauty, she also inherited her

mother's endearing grace, her every gentle virtue ; seemed to check the kindling triumph in the father's bosom. A lurid hue overspread the mantling glow on his cheek ; and, turning from the Commandress towards the window, she heard the struggle in the proud breast of widowed man, to suppress the natural, the just tribute to the image of the lovely bride he had once cherished there ; to the memory of the faithful, the confiding wife, whose heart he must be conscious his desertion had broken ! And he was so. Conscience then shot its gleam. But like a desperate wretch, treading on the torch that might have lit him to sanctuary, because his chosen path must yet be darkness, he quenched the feeling within him by a violent extinction of the memories crowding on his own heart. And leaping again, in mind, to the high goal of his career ; the past was annihilated ; the present alone considered ; and that, only as it led to his grasp of the great object, in his vision of the future.

When he walked back from the brief minutes of his internal conflict, to resume his conference with the protectress of his daughter, all was then stately composure on his fixed brow. He took a small casket from his vest, and poured out of it, jewels, of a size and water that astonished our venerable lady ; though she had been accustomed to the sight of many of the finest. For in that country, transfer of riches being more portable in such a commodity, than in gold to the same amount, considerable payments were often made so ; and the precious stones, being carried immediately to certain Armenian merchants, they gave the due sum on their value ; and afterwards retained them, ready to apply in the same way, to the transmission of a similar degree of wealth, to any point required. But these, were so superior in quantity, and quality, and setting, to any the Commandress had ever beheld in the course of such disbursements, that she looked on them, with not less pondering of thought, than wonder at their magnificence. For among them, was a rich circlet, chiefly of rubies, of a breadth, and diameter, bearing sufficient evidence that it belonged to some princely badge ; but of what rank, crown or coronet, could not be guessed ; every distinguishing form of ornament, that might have led to solving the question, having been removed. In the front of it, however, shone a diamond of a spiral shape, so large and dazzling, that it reminded Paula of the old Arabian legend, of the blinding jewel in the magical girdle

of Pharaoh's daughter, and instinctively she put her hand on her eyes ; but even during that action, with all the dignified disinterestedness of her character, she replied, " These are of too immense a value, for any thing this house's shelter may have done for your child ; nay, your former gifts in gold, have been more than sufficient, to pay half the yearly expenses of our whole little household ! Therefore, take these again ;—for money, nor jewels, can never dry the tears we shall shed in losing her !"

Tears then trickled through the hand on her brow ; and the precious gems she had at first hidden from her sight, were forgotten. The cavalier allowed a short and respectful pause to the venerable mother's sensibility ; then, with renewed energy, pressed the entire mass of jewels, set and unset, which the casket had contained, with the circlet also, upon her. But when she, with an equal apparent determination, persisted in refusing the latter at least, he suddenly changed his manner of earnest gratefulness ; and collecting himself into an aspect of stern haughtiness, with something more of a sovereign pronouncing a command, than a man paying a debt of obligation, he insisted on her receiving the cincture with the rest.

" But," he added, " I do not intend it, to remain a gorgeous heir-loom, in the sacristy of this house ! nor to be committed to the transfer of any merchant.—When I have been gone with my daughter, one month from these gates, then be yourself the bearer of that circlet to the present wearer of the de Bouillon diadem in Jerusalem. Tell him, without that, his purchase is not complete. Let him pay you, and the poor of your mount be the gainers. He knows the pledge ; and, also, may well recognise that spiral stone. Tell him, the pledger will redeem both, on the spot whence that ruby symbol never should have moved. When you see me again, lady, you will know that such things are dust in my path." He walked proudly away, when he had ended speaking : and his eyes flashed, as with fire ; and his lips also moved, as with more words ; but she could not hear them ; yet she almost thought, they proclaimed himself a king !—that she saw a crown round that brow !—one that lightened, and would have blasted her !—She trembled.

" Who art thou ?" she asked, inwardly, while she gazed on him, aghast at his port, and the denunciation of countenance ; for it manifestly threatened the monarch of Jerusa-

lem. "He is the father of my charge!" repeated she to herself. "No desperate assumer of the name. I can never forget that face and mien; though both might seem so altered! But oh, I well remember seeing such flashes scatter the sweet flower, that has perished! And am I to commit my innocent, to this man of unchastened pride? The world, all in his heart—Heaven alone, in hers!"

The Commandress, in the paroxysm of her internal feelings, wrung her hands. But the next instant, recollecting there would yet be the providence of a heavenly Father, over the misguiding of the most erring earthly parent, her momentary despair was checked; and with a tranquillizing brow, she met his returning step. She replied, that, according to his instructions, she would take charge of the jewels, and apply their answering deposit; but, she asked, was she not to be told the name of the noble person, by whose authority she was to seek the august presence of the king of Jerusalem? And then in a voice tremulous with rising emotion, she added—nay, more; was not her heart indeed that of a mother for the beloved child she had so long fostered,—was it not to have the satisfaction of knowing, by name, the parent to whom she resigned her?

He regarded the Commandress with a fixed eye, while she was speaking. When adjuring him, by the dignity of the king of Jerusalem, to grant her request, his expressive lip showed all the scorn of his soul; but when she urged her feelings, as a mother, for his child,—both his eye, and his proud mouth, softened; and laying his hand, but with a firm pressure, on her arm—"Madam," said he, "my name is not to be now, first pronounced to that man, by a woman's tongue. And, with regard to your confidence in me, in respect of your charge, what name can be more binding than that of father?"

"True," returned she, "you are her parent—her only parent! and that character holds a double sanctity. To such, I may safely resign the sacred trust a dying mother committed to my care!"

While making this solemn surrender, she suddenly recollected the coffer, with its accompanying injunctions; which might be considered the last bequest of his wife; and then, with a sacred precision, she repeated their import to him. He started at the first mention of such a deposit; well conjecturing whose letters, and what history, that coffer con-

tained ; but the moment he heard it was yet unviolated, his composure returned ; and he attended, uninterruptingly, till the Commandress concluded with saying—that on the return of Berenice from the mount, she should put the trust into her hand ; and the name, the breaking of its seal must disclose, would then be extended to his child's knowledge alone.

To this he observed, that since his daughter was reclaimed by him, before the coffer was opened, the necessity of her searching its contents, was removed ; and, consequently, it must be delivered to him in its present sealed state :—“ It will then rest with me, as it ought to do ;” continued he, “ to choose when, and how, Berenice may be made to know what she is, besides being my daughter—the daughter of a father, her eyes may then look on—come, to realize on her head, the proudest ambitions of her mother's soul, when she gave me her hand !”

“ And had that unresisting, broken reed, ever a soul so tempered ?” exclaimed the Commandress, crossing her own chastened bosom. “ Alas, alas ! blessed then were the humbling sorrows which laid her, in meekened hope, to draw her last sigh on the green sod of Olivet !”

The widowed husband did not notice this heart-wrung remark ; probably did not hear it ; so entirely was he absorbed in the train of deep meditations, which seemed to have seized him while finishing the last sentence he addressed to his auditress !—And, for some time afterwards, he continued striding the room, with mutterings to himself, and gesticulations of such disdain, and lofty bearing,—that the more and more astounded protectress of his child, gazed at him with increasing anxiety ; feeling, that had she not the silent evidence of great riches, and therefore of power, before her in the open casket, she could almost be induced to suppose the mind of her guest was in the exultation of a distempered state.

“ Oh, would that I were now asleep !” sighed she in her inward thoughts ; “ to wake from this hour of trouble, and find that appalling, mysterious man, still as one dead to his child and me !”

He turned abruptly towards her ; and she felt as if the glance he gave was master of her silent adjuration. She shuddered, though not for herself ;—for Berenice, when she should be alone with him, and might meet such a look !

But it was not meant for the Commandress. Its object was then in his eyes' mental vision. He approached her with a calmer step, and inquired, when his daughter would return from the day's pilgrimage. Paula, relieved by his quieted manner, informed him,—“Not that evening. It being part of the duty, to keep vigils during the night in certain consecrated places of the mount; but that the setting rays of the next day's sun, would be the signal for the procession's descent homewards.”

He said it was well.—The interval would be convenient to him. He should return to his people, whom he had left in the lower valleys of the Kedron; and, having made due preparations for his daughter's travel, would appear again at the convent when all was ready. Perhaps it might be on the morrow evening; perhaps the day after. But he required the coffer to be given to him at his present parting. The Commandress rose, and took it from the recess in her cell where it had lain so many years; and when she put it into the hands of the cavalier, her own trembled; and the tears, she could not restrain, dropped upon its lid. He gently pressed the maternal hand that relinquished it to his.

“Madam,” said he, “be satisfied, I take my daughter to a life worthy of her birth and beauty; yet so sheltered from the world you dread, that when once entered the happy home I have provided her, she will be as safe from care or danger as within these sacred walls.”

“Then I am content!” returned the Commandress; and looking up, she devoutly exclaimed, “You, hear him, sainted Berenice!—and, accept my consummated duty, when I deliver your child into her father's hands!”

The cavalier had placed the coffer in his bosom, and withdrawn from the room, ere the venerable lady had taken her clasped hands from before her face, to which she had raised them in the fervent inward prayer which followed the last utterance of her invocation.

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“— Allike their souls are gone,  
 Who shar'd the funeral feast on Æta's shore,  
 And their's, that o'er the field of Ascalon  
 Swell'd the crusader's hymn!                   HEMANS.

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In crossing the cloister, the Baroness met the strange appearance of a man issuing from the opposite passage. His garb, however, declared his warrant, being that of a palmer, marked to her by the withered leaves pendant round his cap, from that blessed tree of the desert, which, yielding alike food and shade, and pointing where the water-springs lie, becomes the beacon-rests of travellers; and hence distinguishes the pilgrims who pass between the Euphrates and Jerusalem, with its peculiar name. The Baroness, delighted in recognising these emblems of the east, hastened towards him; meaning to ask many questions respecting the country she so loved, and whether he brought any particular tidings of Edessa since the accession of its new sovereign. But when the palmer drew near, though he must have seen by the noble lady's instantly stopping, that she wished to address him, he just raised his cap by a slight touch, as he bowed in passing, and almost instantly vanished through the cloister porch.

She was exceedingly struck by the manner of this simple action, so determinately, yet courteously, distancing interruption; and, not less excited to curiosity by the chivalric movement of his obeisance, equally unlike that of any common military religieux, she hurried to the Commandress's apartment to inquire who he was; or at least learn what he might have told, of her ever-dear Edessa.

She found the Commandress still too much shaken with the effects of her recent conference, to be able to disguise its purport; and the whole story of Berenice's birth, at least all she knew, was at length revealed. But, indeed, the good lady felt she was then only communicating to her friendly guest, what, till that moment held a secret, the course of a few hours more would openly declare to the whole convent, by the departure of its beloved subject, for ever, from its roof.

The Baroness listened with more affectionate interest than surprise. She had herself supposed Berenice sprung from some illustrious blood; and while attending to the agitated Paula's leading inferences, she became more impressed with the probability of her own first suspicions, which had pointed to one or other of the three great auxiliary heroes of the crusade, all kinsmen of the de Bouillon; namely, either of the brothers de Courtenay, or Harold, earl of Beaufort; every one of whom had been noted for

their romantic gallantry, not less in love than in war. The accident of discovering a slight resemblance between the convent's beautiful unknown, and the younger de Courtenay, had decided the Baroness he must be the father. But while repeating these observations in her rejoinders to the Commandress, she acknowledged that her last supposition was entirely done away by the glimpse she had just had of the palmer, the real father, whose face was of a totally different style of feature from that of either of the Courtenays. Besides, she remarked, even if her acquaintance with their persons had not been sufficient to undeceive her, their relative situations at the present time, must have been enough; report having said, that Armand had fallen in the late Egyptian crusade; and with regard to Joselyn, now prince of Edessa, (and therefore placed next in succession to the crown of Jerusalem, when Heaven should call its new king hence;) was it credible that, either as parent or uncle of Berenice, he would have suffered her to remain so many months after his elevation, in the obscurity of a convent!

The Commandress, having admitted that her own conjectures had lain between those same de Courtenays and the Earl of Beaufort, on account indeed of their names having been so often uttered by her deceased guest when she conceived herself alone, and never mentioned by her at any other time, now, with the Baroness, necessarily gave up the idea of either of those noble brothers being the actual personage she had seen in the still self-concealing man, who, from the first, had avowed himself to be the father of Berenice. Both ladies, therefore, would have instantly concluded, that the Anglo-Norman earl must be he, had not each of them started an objection; but on different grounds. The Commandress alleged the probable age of the earl, who, if uncle to the present lord of Edessa, must be too old to make it possible for him to be the cavalier, who, eighteen years ago, did not seem much beyond twenty;—even at that time, then younger than the reported years of either of the Courtenays.

The Baroness smiled at this objection; answering that her's lay in the character of the cavalier, as drawn by the Commandress herself. For though the earl of Beaufort was uncle to the Courtenays, he could not be far from their own age; their mother, though his sister, having been something more than twenty years his senior. But with



regard to the sort of man he was, there rested her demur.—Notwithstanding she had never personally known him, good authority had left an impression with her, that his frankly amiable qualities among friends and foes, were little in harmony with the present representations of the cavalier, so harsh and imperious in his mystery. Nevertheless, she owned men might be different under the gaze of the world, and within the despotic keep of their own power; whether it be their vassal hall, or their lady's chamber. Besides, about twenty years ago, something more or less, she remembered her husband speaking of a rather amusing contention at the court of Constantinople, between Anna Comnena, and one or two other illustrious beauties of the day, for the honour of the young earl of Beaufort's spear in the tournament. He, laughingly, spurred out of the lists, with his victor wreath, when won; and afterwards, in the same vein, told the half-offended princess, that, "Anglo-Norman like, he had cast it to the sea, his legitimate mistress!"

"Now," continued the Baroness, "might not this transmarine fair, have been no other than the future mother of our Berenice? You say, she was lovely as her daughter; and well might such be the rival of the brightest eyes in the then capital of Christendom!"

The Commandress sighed—she could not discuss with any feeling of gayety, a subject of such importance to her pupil. But before she and the lady of Hardres parted, it was with a full conviction between both, that the mysterious cavalier could be no other than the English earl; and that according to the Baroness's guess, seasons and circumstances had struck his nature's unsuspected sparks of evil into action; and hence might come the humours, which, at times, rendered his better dispositions questionable. Our venerable mother granted it might be so; and, as it little became erring humanity to be extreme in judging the amiss of any fellow-creature, she must the rather hope, that whatever wrong bias were there, it would be checked by the only hand which could curb unbridled man, before the imperious spirit of this strange father could inflict itself on the gentle nature of his child. With this sentiment she and the Baroness separated, both on the same intent, to collect their different offerings of affection for Berenice's journey.

The Commandress busied herself through the remainder

of that day, and the chief part of the next; in giving directions respecting the preparation of every comfort that could be devised for a young and inexperienced traveller, while her own maternal hands drew together Berenice's little treasury of books and relics, and packed them carefully into the same mule-chest with her wardrobe. But this was not all; she would not suffer any body else to select the little store for her child's daily refreshment. Dried fruits, with cakes of the finest flour sweetened with honey, and full bunches of the convent's choicest grapes—which Berenice's own hands had often assisted to trail across the vineyard, in front of the refectory window—these were put up into several small caskets, with many a salt tear and blessing mingling on each deposite.

“Where will she be,” cried the lonely lady to herself, “when she opens what I now close? Oh, my child, whither does this proud miened father carry thee? What is that happy sheltered home he has promised me for thee? Thy mother long looked for such, and found it in the grave—the home, man cannot disturb.” It was then the evening of the second day; and her eyes met the brilliant rays of the declining sun, in transitory flickering reflections, on the opposite wall of her chamber. “Oh!” she exclaimed, “she will soon be here!—and he also, who is to take my earthly treasure from me?” And bursting into tears, her venerable head dropt on the last basket she was binding with its reeds.

The signal of that setting orb was also remembered by the father of Berenice. But he passed by Saint Mary's; and went forward through the winding thickets of the upward woods, with the design of meeting his daughter; or rather to excite again the triumphant cordial anticipations of his soul, by contemplating her youthful, animated beauties, unchecked, unagitated, by the awe and emotions that must attend her first consciousness of being in the presence of a parent so long unknown. Having proceeded some time, he took an inadvertent turn into a path, leading more northerly than the direction in which he meant to go, and found himself issue forth on an open brow of the mountain; which, by the unimpeded view it unfolded of the distant horizon in that quarter; and the form of the vast promontory itself, its shape being that of a broken arch, projecting with a fearful height of precipice over the north western extremity

of the valley of Jehoshaphat;—he could not doubt, that he then stood on the avoided point of Chamosh; the once noted high-place of the abominable rites of the apostate kings of the opposite holy hill; and his own thoughts darkened their meditations.

He paced, backwards and forwards, over that silent altar of former groaning sacrifices. How magnificent had been the day of mercy, which had risen there extinguishing the fires of immolation, and sheathing the slaughterer's knife; "It was well and is well!"—cried he.—"All changes are venal, that light not such mischiefs again!"

The theatre of nature around him, seemed worthy the peaceful morning which had then broken on its beauties; and the bright serenity of the present evening, was almost enough to lull his troubled bosom to an answering calm! a deep forgetfulness!

While he stopped to gaze on the rich panoply of its golden clouds, rolling over each other, and parting their resplendent billows, as if to receive the descending chariot of the sun—wheeling down the steep of heaven into the sea of pure ethereal light expanded beneath them; at that moment, the clamour of trumpets from beneath the rock, startled the contemplating chief, and he sprang back as if he had trod on an adder.

They sounded again; and with the notes which usually proclaim some eminent victory. "Aye!" cried he, "I hear, and know thee!—Nor shall I feel, that thou canst make me fly thee—even here!—No; let my eye behold—and blast thee!"—And with the fearful malediction, writ as with characters of fire upon his brow, denouncing hatred, inextinguishable hatred, he hurried to the promontory point; and, looking down, beheld, low in the deep green of the valley, all shining bright under the slant beams of the setting sun, the inaugural procession of Baldwin du Bourg, the new king of Jerusalem.

He was come to complete the duty of the day. Having, emblematically, washed away all earthly pride in such elevation, by the immersion of his crown in the sacred fount of Siloam; he walked in his royal robes, but unsandalled feet, to the tomb of the prophets, at the foot of the mount, there to receive the sceptre surmounted by the dove of heavenly promise: a badge of regal power, which Godfrey de Bouillon would never presume to touch; but which his brother,

the first Baldwin, had swayed for eighteen years of justice, to the peace of the land, and the honour of his name!

At the moment, when the door of the hallowed sepulchre opened, and the patriarch of Jerusalem put the consecrated ensign into the new monarch's hand, then blew the clangor of the trumpets a third time. And, just as he turned on his steps, bearing the sceptre, with the banners of Sion floating over his head, and the heralds were loudly proclaiming Baldwin the Second!—the sun's effulgent rays striking on the jewelled points of his crown, made them shine, even with a sort of preternatural glory.

The cavalier beheld the whole. His eyes were rivetted to the object. But his teeth gnashed against each other; and the clenched hand in his breast, worked with an impotent rage, as if it would tear out the heart, writhing to torture, within. Utterance was denied to the storm that shook him. But the bristles of his hair stood up; and his flaming eyeballs seemed starting from their sockets. Perturbed in every limb, the wind, blowing aside his vestments, showed, in their disordered motions, that a being moved there, whose spirit was at war with humanity.—Indeed, he hardly knew what he did; that he had seized a piece of the rock to hurl it from the mount, even as if he held a thunderbolt. The king looked up. But whether that glance discerned the distant menacing figure on the beetling cliff, which then hung over the passing group, the cavalier cared not. He saw him; and that was every thing to his full soul of hate. But its tongue now forced an utterance.

“The deep perdition of my transgressions, past and to come, blight thee! Wither thee up! till they bring me to walk as thou dost now—Baldwin, accursed!”

“Cursed!” retorted a loud, and thrilling voice, even in the teeth of his malediction; and, ere his wrathful start had moved him one step backward—forward, would have precipitated him headlong,—“Cursed!” resounded from behind him. He turned, in fury; but nothing living was visible there, while “Cursed, Cursed!” reverberated in shrill, retreating echoes, till they faded away into the far-off sky; like the reluctant denunciation of some departing heavenly host. He recovered his presence of mind, while listening, wonderingly, to the gradually dying accents of the visionary respondent anathema; then, breaking into a scornful laugh, withdrew his hand from the hilt of the sword he





“Ah!” exclaimed she, while held in the venerable arms, “I am too happy!—I have seen that Jerusalem, which my brave father assisted to win from sacrilege—where my mother sleeps in a hallowed rest!—And I have seen the hero-king, who will guard her tomb—so near the holiest spot on earth.—Oh, my best friend! In a few months I, too, shall pour forth my gratitude there!—I, the humblest, happiest handmaid waiting on that sacred sepulchre!”

“My child,” returned the Commandress, straining her with a pious resignation to her maternal breast;—“Heaven has provided your filial piety other duties!”—and, with the word, raising her from her fond position, she took her aside to her private apartment; and there gently unfolded to her, whom she might expect to see ere that evening closed; and that his purpose was to take her with him from the convent for ever.

Berenice listened with amazement; and a quick succession of immediately awakened filial feelings, and their thoughts, agitated her, at times, almost to fainting. But tears of a grateful joy at last gave freedom to her breathing, restrained, before, by blissful wonder; and she uttered her thankfulness, in language which the Commandress felt, ought to comfort herself.

For the delighted, sacred convictions, that she had indeed a parent living; and that he was come; and that she should look on him; and abide in his bosom;—were too simply present with Berenice’s young, wo-unstricken heart, for her to find there even a perception of the consequences implied in the other part of the information;—that, in attaining that one object of happiness, she must leave all the others she had loved from infancy; and go, she knew not whither—far away!

The cavalier being again arrived, and wishing to see the Commandress, was whispered to her by a serving-sister, before she felt to herself she had half completed her communications to her beloved charge. But Berenice, quite happy, and bewildered by the surprise and suddenness of what she had first heard, hardly had been conscious to any thing that was further added; nor did she even think of asking the name or quality of her father—subjects she had often wistfully mused on!—though the Commandress’s grateful remarks on the magnificence of the jewels he had brought, in pledge of his future munificence, might have

excited the question. Berenice looked at them without seeing them; for, just as the opened casket was placed before her, the serving-sister had entered, and whispered her mistress; a glance from the eye of the daughter, inquired of her maternal friend, "Who had been announced?"

"It is your father," returned she, "and he awaits us in my private parlour."

Berenice sprang from her seat. Her heart was already at the feet of her father—and she flew, conscious to nothing, till she was in the room of his presence; and hardly even then, till she found herself raised in his arms from the ground, where she had indeed cast herself before him;—and felt herself clasped, for the first time, to the warm, sheltering bosom of a parent. The fulness of her joy was too much; and, with a faint, murmuring sob, she answered the blissful recognition she heard—"my daughter!"—and turning her face upon that bosom, swooned to momentary lifelessness.

While she was recovering to perfect recollection, where the anxious care of the Commandress had placed her from the infectious agitation of her father's arms, she felt his hand yet clasping hers; it seemed to touch her heart; and gently drawing it towards her breast, she pressed it there, with all a daughter's filial reverence. Her father's eyes were riveted on her re-animating face; while her's half-opening, and closing again under their lucid drops, appeared even like stars struggling with some dewy cloud, which rather gemmed than dimmed their half-seen radiance. The Commandress, while anxiously removing her dear pupil's veil, to give her more air, saw indeed reason to pray for Heaven's calming power over all that too eloquent pathos in her loveliness, by strengthening the tender sensibility which gave it such softening flow.—"Ah! Berenice," thought she, "this is thy mother's heart!"

What were her father's thoughts?

"How beautiful she is!" was the internal remark he made, while gazing on her with a serenity in his admiration, and a steadfastness of resolve, which surprised himself. Only a few minutes before,—and ere he had held her in his arms, and called her *daughter!*—it was not so; then his resolution almost wavered; but now—how was it? The answer might have been found, in the apprehensive conscience of a husband's heart; which, though not acknow-



ledging it to himself, had, at first sight of Berenice, made her seem to him even as the lovely phantom of another form. For, as she appeared to him through the shadowy screen of the intervening boughs, and then, at a greater distance, on the hill cliff, a certain resemblance in the ethereal movements of her figure, to the peculiar graces of his own lost Berenice, making him feel at once, this was *her daughter!*—the husband's fond memories, in those moments, completing the picture, could not but consecrate the child to all a father's tenderness.

But when in the Commandress's chamber, and he looked on the entirely unveiled face of his daughter; the child he had just so convulsively held to his bosom, with every parental, every conjugal feeling, roused to tumults there! When he saw her beautiful form, perfect in the untouched symmetry of a happy youth, extended on the couch-seat where her protectress had laid it; when that face he had just imprinted with a kiss which shot a dagger to his soul, was quite revealed to him; he marvelled at the instant change within him; every tempestuous surge had sunk at once. He beheld a lovely woman!—But where was the apparition, his soul felt to have seen on the mount? Here were, indeed, all the kindling blooms of youth and innocence; bright tresses, falling over features of matchless mould; but, of how different a contour from her mother's!—(Paula's anxious eye had marked they were his own!) And then the luxuriant hair itself, that partially shaded them! During her trembling movements, it might have been deemed light rather than shadow! The long mantling ringlets of his own lost Berenice, had been black as night—night, round the fair moon, reflecting brightness! But these golden tresses of her child, spreading over her bosom, under the last beam of the evening sun, might have almost been deemed part of his lingering rays!

Beauty was indeed here; beauty, even more faultless than her mother's; but it did not now touch one responsive chord in her father's breast; for it no longer reminded him of her who had awakened the first, nay, it may be said, who had hushed the last, throb of real rapture in his heart!—real, because it was guiltless; and he felt that angels might have shared it. But that hour and day were gone; and the sky was full of tempest that was to usher in his next dawn

of transport. "De it ise!" cried he, exultingly, within himself, "I now hold her who shall bring it me!"

While this passed in his mind, his eye, meeting that of the Commandress, looked his proud satisfaction in the beauty of his daughter, but not a trace of any regretful memory of her who had given her life.

"Has this mysterious being, a heart!" sighed the shuddering Paula to herself.

Yes! and that heart was man's—various, ambitious, self-centered man! For even Berenice, the adored wife of his bosom, even while he clasped her most rapturously there, was not the passion of his soul. That fondness of her nature, which made him too truly as a god to her, had indeed been excited by his own resistless love; and her sweet, devoted tenderness he received as his soul's balm. But it never could have placed a bond on him to live for her alone, one day, who would have sacrificed the whole of her existence, to purchase him the happiness of a single moment! In the first and full enjoyment of her gentle virtues, they had made him forget his nature; they had given him to taste, what man might have been before the fall. But there was that within him, which could not rest. He must seize, and struggle to subdue; and hold in chains, of a proud, compelling vassalage, the beings he enjoyed to rule, and woman's soft, submissive heart, was no sufficient throne for him!—So had the wife found it, dearly as he loved her; and so must the daughter meet the destiny in his character.

Berenice lay in the agitated trance of her new happiness, while he thought all this. But when she did open her eyes and looked up into his face, she could not read the absence of the father there, tears still blinding her; and her feelings being too full of a child's reverence, in her joy, to allow her lips to touch even the hand she was yet clasping to her heart, she cast herself off the chair to the ground; and on her knees, embracing his, the first words that broke faltering from her tongue, were—"O! bless me—my father!"

The cavalier, now indeed passed his hand over the rushing current on his brow. The accents were those of his dead Berenice! and he had felt her kneel thus! But his pausing heart soon recovered its tone; and he bent towards her, with a sudden smiling illumination over his

whole countenance, which, to the Commandress's eye, seemed to restore his fine features to all she had formerly beheld there; to present him to her again, what she had seen him, even in that very chamber, eighteen years ago, when he supposed she came to tell him he was the father of a son!

The change then was fearful! The present, she hailed; and its brightness was not so fleeting as that in the hour she too well remembered.

The Cavalier raised his daughter; placed her on the seat beside him; and, with the soft lawn of her veil, which lay near, wiping away the gliding drops from her cheeks, gently lifted the tear-wet ringlets from her forehead, and again gazed admiringly on her face. She felt that look of full, self-gratulatory satisfaction in his child, as if she heard the blessing breathed over her she had sought. But, alas, Berenice! it was not there. Thy father dared not bless thee!

Recent, as yesterday, seem to me, even now, the circumstances of that evening. The emotions of the first meeting having subsided, hour after hour passed blissfully to Berenice in the presence of her father; who appeared never to be sated in dwelling on the graces and accomplishments of his newly-recognised daughter.

Again and again he called on her to delight him with her exquisite touching of the lute, the lyre, and the harp. Exquisite indeed, for it was all done with the simplicity of a genius which hardly needed art to modulate the genuine taste of her ear and hand. The harp was the native instrument of Palestine; and the strains she raised from it, something more than taste confined to thy songs, sweet Sion! The Cavalier listened attentive, with a downcast, quivering eyelid; yet he did not desire them a second time. But when she took the Roman lute, it was a hymn to the seasons she made answer its strings, and the soft notes of her voice seemed the very turtle's tenderest swell. Again and again she repeated this, and her father walked the room in ecstasy.

"But your lyre, Berenice?" said he, "Santa Paula tells me, you make that speak like a muse!"

The reverend mother's pale cheek mantled, though she answered with a gentle smile:—"A sacred one, then; for I said, like another Miriam!"

Berenice did not wait for a second intimation from her father. All in air at sight of the animated pleasure she gave him ; (and such bursts of admiration she had never heard before ; quiet, evident enjoyment, being all the praise deemed wholesome, within those walls for the heart's humility ; she flew to an inner apartment of the room, where the instruments were kept, and returned with the lyre on her arm.

The lightness of her step, and the corresponding turn in her graceful figure, with which she moved forward, seemed almost the beautiful position of a Grecian nymph coming forth to the dance ; and her white, rose tipped fingers, in the happy buoyancy of her spirits, sweeping a few gay notes over the chords while she advanced, gave her father to see at a glance that she possessed as much power over the enchantments of motion, as of sound.

He looked to the Commandress, and inquired, whether, if the young pupils of that house were allowed the innocent recreation of dancing, he might not now see his child in that most pleasing exercise of youth ?

" Whatever is an innocent recreation," replied the venerable lady, " is privileged here. It well becomes the guiltless, and the guileless, to be gay in their happiness ; and thus, I am glad to bid Berenice please her father in this, as in her other little accomplishments."

But now Berenice's friend Mildred was obliged to be summoned, to complete the proposed movement ; no dancing being there taught for display, none was ever done singly. She obeyed. Each held a lyre ; and each accompanied the expressive graces of their motions, with a responsive touch of their instruments. The evolutions of Mildred were fine ; perhaps, would have been finest, any where else than thus compared with Berenice. But Berenice moved like one to whom tuition never could have given such movements. She seemed no longer a creature of earth, but some aerial spirit floating through ether. The ground, she did not seem to touch ; but glided over it, with such graceful, nay eloquent expression in every action, that her father could no longer contain himself. He rushed up to her, and catching her wildly in his arms, exclaimed " Yes, my daughter ! thou art a treasure to command the world !"

And, oh Berenice! that was thy night of intoxicated enjoyment. At that moment, you felt, you commanded the world! Thy world! Thou wast held to an applauding father's heart, and the pure lips of a grateful happy daughter, then pressed that father's cheek! The source of his tumultuous feelings, time was yet to unfold.

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“ By a divine instinct, men's minds mistrust  
 Ensuing danger; as, by proof, we see  
 The waters swell before a boisterous storm.  
 But leave it all to God.”

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The morning's dawn of Berenice's departure, awoke her from a sweet sleep: in which all the agitations of the preceding day, had been hushed to a sacred repose, after an earnest prayer before she slept, for a sense of measure in her joy;—a joy, which had so hurried her thoughts from all of her former self, that raptured expectation of seeing and sharing the home of this new-found, idolizing father, had even caused her to forget, in his presence, the long-cherished hope, then so near the promised moment of fulfilment, of dedicating one year at least of her future life, to vigils which had been so solemnly invoked by the sainted dead, so fervently vowed by herself, at her mother's tomb.

“ Yes, my mother!” she repeated, while rising from her knees in the morning, after orisons then equally devoted to both parents; “ when he brings me back from this hasty journey, that he says we must take now; then I shall obey thee, and he will weep at thy sepulchre with me!”

Happy in the opening visions of her young heart, she turned from the little altar of her cell, towards the entering footsteps of the serving-sisters; who brought in, and left, a little caravan of vestments, just arrived from the Cavalier for his daughter's travelling apparel, and now sent in by the Commandress for her raiment in them. She raised the wicker that covered them, and each surprised her by the novelty of its appearance. But these garments, so strange to her eye and use at first sight, proved, on examination, to

be only of the common fashion of the east, as worn by women of rank there, whether Christian or Mahometan. The fabric, indeed, was of more than usual costly materials ; being Cashmere camlet, not less fine in texture than spotless in whiteness ; with a caftan to cover all, of the brightest scarlet, and seemingly scattered over with a gold dust, so brilliant and light, that when her customary attendant, a little Syrian damsel, approached to lift it, she almost expected to see the glittering shower fall to the ground. But when the girl found the shining material not only adhere, but also a part of the stuff itself, she laughed with childish pleasure, in her wondering admiration ; and then, as suddenly looking grave, with an air of no small consequence in her knowledge, declared, " it could be no other than some of the costly cloth of *Baudkins*, she had often heard her father tell of, as coming from the farthest country in the world !"

" If so, perhaps I am going to that country !" thought Berenice, recollecting that her father had not named to where he was taking her. But she did not speak the query, to the little talkative damsel : only smiled, as in some reply to her communication.

Another time, her youthful curiosity might have felt a similar gratification in viewing the splendid rarity, and in questioning Sarai, of all she knew about where that country was, whence it had come. But at the present moment, it was rather with a sort of inexplicable shrinking from the strange apparel, than inquisitiveness concerning its origin, that she saw the glittering vestment braced over her transparent cymar ; and, while clasp after clasp were fastening it on, she instinctively turned her eyes towards the meek, shadowy gray of her novice habit, with its white cross, pure as the silver wings of the dove, upon its bosom, her only raiment for eighteen years ! It lay in a corner of the cell on the floor, where the Syrian had thrown it, on filling its place on a chair with the new garments from the cavalier.

Berenice fixed her gaze on it, with a feeling of one looking for the last time on a long familiar, and therefore endeared companion. The little waiting damsel, meanwhile, continued her busy task, for having frequently seen a married sister, with whom she sometime lived at Damascus, array herself in the gala dress of the country, for the often occurring festi-

vals, she found no difficulty now in properly disposing the novel ornaments of her young and unobserving mistress.

She gathered together her redundantly flowing tresses, and weaving them into close plaits, bound them under the rich cincture that was to receive the coiling turban. The latter was to occupy the former station of the simple linen veil and olive wreath, on that fair brow. And, with all a woman's pride,—young as the handmaid was, to feel so,—in the beauty she was adorning, she wrapped the gorgeous shawl, sent for the purpose, round the bright forehead.

Exultingly she finished; and again laughing with delight, snatched up the small mirror of a nun's toilet, scarcely a span wide, and put it into the hand of Berenice, to admire the beautiful metamorphose she had made. But Berenice started at the strange apparition she presented to her own eyes; exclaiming, "Ah! how like an infidel woman I look!"

"No, no," returned the damsel, clapping her hands, "like Queen Esther, when she found favour in the sight of King Ahasuerus."

Berenice rose, and put down the glass, without reply; but her heart answered, "May I, indeed, ever find favour in my father's sight, and my dress, whether cloth of gold, or sackcloth, shall be equally precious to me."

And thus reconciled to her new fashion, though sighing, she smiled her thanks to Sarai, for the pains she had taken in making her so—unlike herself! The maiden kissed her hand, and with a gush of tears in her otherwise always sportive eyes, hurryingly withdrew.

Almost in the same moment, while Berenice was wiping away the ready answering drop, the Commandress entered. The now touched heart guessed her purpose;—to give her beloved pupil her parting admonition; or rather her tenderest farewell blessing, without other spectator; ere she led her thence, to take her affectionate leave of the convent sisters, then assembled in the refectory for that purpose.

"I come, my child," cried she, folding her to her breast, with a pang there, she dared not utter, at sight of that dress, so full of the gorgeous world!—"I come, to hold thee for a few brief moments, where thou hast been cherished for so many years!—here, on my heart!—ere we part indeed, for our long, long separation!"

"Oh, madam!" returned Berenice, the contagion of the

venerable lady's sensibility suffusing her own bosom ;—" Is it then to so very far a country my father takes me, that it must be long, very long, before he brings me back again?"

" Brings you back, Berenice! Alas! will the world ever permit you to see this holy spot again?—You go to the world, and to your father's home.—But where that is, my child, I do not know. He has not, yet, told me even his name."

The countenance of the Commandress, in uttering this, expressed what she did not mean to show—the extreme disturbance of her mind at the still persisted mystery. Berenice's quick observation took alarm, and, in spite of herself, feeling an apprehensive chill stealing through her veins, without perhaps being quite aware of the full import of her own words, she faltered out:

" But he is my father."

" Were there doubt of that," returned the Commandress, " the world's force should not take thee from these walls. I can never forget the identity of that noble port; those features, now time-furrowed; and that wonderful smile, which shone on you last night.—Oh, I have often seen it bid your mother forget her sorrows, and she obeyed—because he willed it!"

Berenice felt that smile, and all the filial happiness of the preceding evening, recalled to her in that single word; and, smiling like it herself, her tears standing but as summer dew upon her cheeks, and fondly kissing the revered lips which had pronounced it, she exclaimed,—“ So shall his will ever command the happiness of his daughter! Conceal whatever he may, he is my father! and that is sufficient for my trust, and my love.”

The Commandress was rallied to her own confidence in the overruling protection of a yet more efficient—an Almighty parent—by this reply. And, even while her assured spirit was breathing the spontaneous benediction of an almost prophetic blessing, on such true filial piety, Mildred entered the room, to say the cavalier was in the convent, and the travelling train at the gate. The venerable mother, and Berenice, at this announcement, by one impulse were locked in each other's arms; and the moment was not a brief one.

In a few minutes afterwards, Berenice had passed into the refectory, and was surrounded by the companions of



her childhood. Tears, now flowed copiously from her eyes, —from all; embraces, prayers, clung around her. Salomé's pale lips pressed her cheek, and she tremblingly whispered,

“If you go eastward—and see Edessa—remember me! there is one——”

Berenice's heart finished the uncompleted sentence, and she gently answered—“I will remember, that Alexis Pologne has yet a sister here!”

Salomé needed no more. She drew her thick veil over her face, and hurried to her cell.

Berenice heard the door of the convent parlour, shut behind herself, after she had entered there, before she ceased to hear the loud sobs of the rest of her companions, echoing down the long passage from the refectory. In the parlour, she found her father, seated with the Commandress; who had proceeded thither to hold a last discourse with him, during his daughter's parting with the objects of her earliest affections.

He rose on her entrance; the same gracious countenance, immediately clearing away the stern gravity of brow with which he was listening to her protectress. But his observing eye, seemed scanning her from head to foot, till its usual lustre blazed to an effulgence, which, with something of the terrific uniting in its expression, so amazed and dazzled his child, that, unable to bear it longer, she bent her lips to his hand; while her heart panted in her bosom, as if she were under the gaze of some supernatural being. The cavalier well understood the effect of his look, and he inwardly felicitated himself on the power it acknowledged.

But, ere much could be spoken on either side, and Berenice's agitation made what she said hardly intelligible, Mildred, and the Baroness of Hardres, had glided into the room; to take their leave of one so beloved, before she went forth, and met the full distress assembled to bewail her.

Mildred had not words for utterance. But her heart beat its agonized farewell, against that of her most cherished friend. Berenice did speak; but so low, and tremulously, that only her friend heard her. “Mildred! my elder sister, in this dear house! You are to be a nun. But,

whithersoever I go, if God blesses me—I shall die in your arms at last !”

Mildred can never forget the thrill of her soul at that moment. But it is yet in the bosom of our God, in which arms, the one or other is to meet His summons !

The Baroness of Hardres loved Berenice ; but not as the companions of her infancy loved her. Hence, she was able to mix the world's courtesies to the father, with her parting adieus to his child. And, perhaps, the yearning anxiety within her, to be really satisfied by something more than conjecture, of *who he was*, who was bearing away from that roof the very lamp of all its cheerfulness ; this idea might urge her to the hazardous reference, in the form of a vague compliment, which proved not less abortive of her aim, than dangerous to the peace of her who had awakened such interest. She took her silently weeping, from the relinquishing embrace of Mildred ; and, holding her tenderly in her arms, “ Berenice,” said she, “ at this moment of losing you, I would yet congratulate you on quitting even the dearest friends, for a noble father's care !

“ Ah ! brave sir,” continued she, turning her own frank and noble countenance towards him, while his daughter's face leaned still on her bosom ; “ it is the wife of Ancher of Hardres, whom this dear child has comforted through many dreary hours divided from him. Receive, then, my husband's thanks with mine, for even the brief loan of such a treasure ! A brother soldier's thanks ! And, I feel, I need not doubt that a knight, with such a mien as Berenice's father's, must well know that most faithful ally of the Bouillon princes here in Palestine, the friend of their hero kinsman, Harold of Beaufort, the flower of our British host !”

While she was speaking, the features of her auditor gradually darkened to a haughty gloom ; but at the close, on her adverting to the princes, and the earl, his very brow seemed to emit lightnings. A flash shot from his eyes—from her, to his daughter, and thence on her again,—as if he would consume both, for having dared to attempt penetrating by stratagem, what he had determined to conceal.

But the innocent Berenice, unconscious almost of what had been said, saw not that look. The Baroness met it, and shuddered as one grazed by a thunderbolt. No eye beheld it, that did not shudder too ; and, instinctively, crossing ourselves, we put up a silent prayer for our devoted Berenice.

The Baroness raised her, she knew not how, from her bosom, nor what hurried farewell she murmured in her ear.

But the cavalier, having launched his indignation, was immediately present to himself again. He returned the lady of Hardres, a coldly dignified acknowledgment for her kind sentiments towards his daughter; and then taking the hand of Berenice,

“My child,” said he, “your bearers are at the gate.—Kneel to your benefactress, for her parting benison!—and we must be gone.”

Berenice obeyed, with a kneeling heart as well as limb. But in that hour all was well nigh a vision to her. She only knew, that she heard those revered accents over her; that she was led from the room, where she was taken from the arms which had first received her into this world, by the supporting arm of him who had given her life. And the genial warmth of the paternal bosom against which she then leaned, seemed to sustain her indeed from fainting, while passing along the cloister, crowded with the widows, and the orphans, whom her charitable cares had ministered to; whether in the shape of comfort to the sick, or pouring her own pious spirit into the opening minds of the children. Their lamentations rung in her ears like a funeral knell, for she had heard such only over their dead; and she found a too true evidence of the sincerity of their grief, as those nearest her caught the corners of the large veil and mantle, with which her father had covered her Asiatic dress in quitting the parlour, and snatching them to their lips, and streaming eyes, wetted them with tears.

At the gate, the throng was even greater. The villagers of Saint Mary's and their children, were there. And, just as she was lifted into her curtained vehicle, from their clinging arms, and pressing forward with their little offerings, she felt her hand touched by a bearded face. Her eye glanced down, and, under the hermit hood that looked up to her in the act, she saw the deeply remembered countenance of the aged Hadjé.

“Alla guard thee!” whispered he, putting something into the hand he instantly relinquished; and, dropping his cowl again quite over his face, crawled away, unrecognised, among the weeping crowd.

The cavalier, full of his own thoughts at this amazing general homage to his child,—the homage of her goodness

alone!—turned to those of the convent who had attended her to the gate, and, in a low voice, ordered that a dole from the funds he never would leave dry, should be liberally dispensed to all without and all within, who thus loved his daughter and regretted her. But, though spoken for only one ear, Berenice heard the beneficent command, while oppressed with the variety of her emotions she had sunk down on the silken cushions of her vehicle; and now, her overflowing heart gratefully murmured to herself—“ Bless thee, my father !”

The Cavalier closed the curtains round her; and pronouncing the word, “ Proceed,”—the throng separated from before the mules which bore the canopied machine that shut her from their sight; but a wail arose, as if it were her hearse they saw; and again Berenice trembled on her gorgeous bed within.

The animals that carried her, moved lightly over the smooth sod; and swiftly, and sure-footed, down the craggy steeps of the hill; but still the cries of weeping, and lamentation, seemed to follow her long in distinct familiar voices, till intervening distance mingled them into one sound; like the murmur of trees, or the beating of the surge upon the shore; and, at last, gradually sunk them, with the dying breeze, into total silence.

Berenice’s hand gently smote her bosom, while, in faint utterance, she exclaimed—“ And so, dear Olivet, we are parted !”

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“ ————— What is he, whose grief  
Bears such an emphasis!—whose phrase of sorrow  
Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand  
Like wonder-wounded hearers ?”

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The stillness which followed the mourning from the Mount, had been to Berenice like the extinction of a friend’s last sigh; and, having called forth its answering ejaculation from her heart, she had sunk into tears; and then into a sleep, the consequence, and the balm, of exhausted nature.

It was within an hour of mid-day when she awoke. But where was she?—Her father, who had dismounted from his horse, and approached the side of her vehicle, heard her

stir ; and, opening its curtain, told her the mules were halted at the pass of Adomnin ; where he had left his armed attendants to be ready to rejoin him ; “ such being a necessary guard through the always infamous valley of Jericho.”

At the name of that valley, which, though it might be terrible, could never sound in unison with an opprobrious epithet, to her ear, to whom the parable of the Samaritan had rendered it a scene of the most animating interest, she started from her tear-stained pillow ; and, with all the enthusiasm of her quick sensibility to sublime as well as tender objects, promptly obeyed her father's request, that she would alight, to repose herself during his inspection of the cavalcade. Almost without his assistance, she stepped down upon the rough soil of the pass ; not regarding its peril to her soft, lightly slippered feet, though the whole ground was covered with the loose fallen stones which continually broke from the beetling cliffs above. The huge overhanging rocks there, were tremendous ; appearing at some points to meet, but at a height so immense, that the main tower of an old Jewish fort, now in ruins, stood half way up the craggy side of the defile, and yet the precipice above seemed nothing lessened.

The fort itself, presented a specimen of true Eastern abandonment. The great tower was actually grown into the body of the rock, against which it had been built ; and the entire surface being encrusted with masses of moss, and stony excrescences, by the power of time, its shape only, bore any show of its having been of other fabric. From the low square portal, stretched the crumbling traces of its rampart walls, down to the gorge of the pass, where they were met by one of its flanking towers ; which formerly had been joined to an opposite bulwark of the same sort, by a pair of strong iron gates ; all, indeed, of the latter were gone, excepting the vestige of a huge staple in the remnant of wall which yet remained of the other totally demolished tower ; though still marking where the great excluding barrier had been.

Berenice looked up, and around her.—On the clear sky, peering through the giddy heights above ;—on the dark shadows of the incumbent rocks ;—on the yet abiding bulwarks of the brave of other days ;—the days of Israel's martial glory ! of David, and Saul, and Joshua !

Her eye turned on her father ; who stood, examining her

countenance while she thus gazed, with a wonder within him that made him question the evidence of his senses. "What is it?" said he to himself: "Had this been the son, I expected Berenice would give me under that convent roof, I might have anticipated that rocks, and towers, and desolation, and peril in prospect, would have dried the tears of his nursery regrets;—but, my daughter! standing, as if her soul were now at home—it is not to be comprehended!—"

"Berenice!" said he, speaking aloud; when her brightened eye sought his, full of the sublime, the rapt perceptions, of indeed her soul; but, incapable of uttering them, she put her hand into his, outstretched to receive it;—"Berenice, what are you thinking of?"—and his smile invited a frank reply.

"I hardly know," was her blushing answer; "but I feel, my father," said she, drawing close to his side, and fondly clasping his arm between hers;—"As if you were taking me to all the places in the world, that I could wish to see, to make me happy!"

"And can seeing places, make you happy Berenice?"

"Not any places;" she replied: "but such as these. Such as I saw yesterday, from the Mount, where the great and good have trod before me; and their footsteps seem to have left a presence, that I see and feel."

"And that is enough," rejoined he, "to sooth your female fears in a place like this?"

"Where, and what should I fear," returned she, though more timidly, and again pressing the arm she leaned on; "who, fear, when my father is with me!"

The Cavalier at that moment seemed to have struck his foot against a large stone in the path, and suddenly dropping her hand, stopped, as if to move the impediment out of the way; but, lifting it up, he cast it with a violence on the opposite cliff that shattered it to atoms. Berenice was surprised to see, on his turning round, how this trifling annoyance had disturbed the countenance of her father; neither did he at all resume the discourse it had interrupted, but called to a woman, by the name of Rhodie, whom his daughter then perceived issuing from the portal of the old tower above.

His summons was quickly answered, by this person hurrying down the precipitous zigzag; and in a few minutes standing before him, bowing her half veiled head to the

ground. He instantly committed his daughter to her charge ; —and Berenice, as immediately obeyed the pointing of his finger, by following her future attendant up the same path she had descended. Fortunately, she found such a path no new thing ; having been accustomed to similar, in climbing the often deemed inaccessible pinnacles of her native mount, when, even while a laughing child, she left her less adventurous companions behind her, and perched like some happy cherub amidst the clasping roots of the evergreen oaks on the summit, called aloud on the little crows below, to come and look how far she could see ! —But how minor those heights, to what she now beheld around her !

Entered within the tower, her eye met a strange mixture of modern Eastern refinement, with all the wild abandonment of that ancient fortress. The rugged stone walls, in parts, dripped with oozing water from the earth-springs behind them ; and in other places, were covered with a spontaneous growth of bushy verdure ; while even the large limbs of trees projected through the fissures, and hanging down from the roofless battlement, occupied with their abundant foliage, the former stations where the banners of Judea and Rome had waved. The floor was a cleared surface of the native rock ; just what it had been of old time, when the mailed heel of the warrior trod it, and his rest between the watches, was found on its hard bed.

But now, on a rather raised shelving part, towards the farther end, Berenice saw that a rich carpet was spread, and embroidered cushions laid on it, as if for repose ; while a most splendid equipage for refreshment, shone on a tray before them, mingling the bright hues of gold and silver, with those of the blooming fruits each glittering vessel contained. A silken canopy, stretched over all, and looped from branch to branch of the pendent trees, recalled to Berenice's recollection, another temporary shelter of the same character. But how different this splendid little *menzil*, (for so the woman named it, while inviting her towards it ; ) from that she had seen in the Moslem dell ; where squalid poverty, stamped every national peculiarity, with the impression of loathsome discomfort. But this was altogether like a feast described in a fairy tale ; and its novelty delighted, even more than it surprised her.

While ascending to the fort, she had gladly discovered, in the respectful offers of Rhodie to assist her up the ac

clivity, that her present attendant could speak the common language of Palestine. Her first appearance had not promised so much; her complexion being not only of the darkest Asiatic hue, but the commands of the Cavalier were given to her in a mixed kind of Armenian dialect, hardly ever heard west of the Euphrates. Berenice's general study of languages, and fondness to discourse with pilgrims of all countries, particularly from the east, had made her sufficiently acquainted with the Armenian tongue, to understand it when spoken; but not knowing enough, to speak it herself, she was much pleased to find it in her power to satisfy her wondering curiosity by questions about all she saw. And she was soon informed, that such desolate halting places, were those most likely to be found every where in the east, when out of the reach of convent benevolence, caravansary shelter, or the granted hospitality of an Arab tent.

"And thus," said the woman, "my lord's servants spread his bread and his salt, and put water in his own vessels, and lay his carpet for sleep, where the sun may not burn him at noon, nor the moon shed on him her dews at night; and the like we do for my lady his daughter!"

Rhodie's head bowed low to the ground while she spoke, and pointed for Berenice to take her place on the cushions. But Berenice drew back, asking where her father was to sit? Rhodie replied, he would not partake her repast this time; being without, preparing the men for accomplishing the passage of the valley before the shadows of evening. For at those hours, the robbers from its mountain caverns, were most likely to take travellers by ambuscade.

"But," continued she, "my lord, your father, would slay every man of them, ere they could touch the hem of your garment. His sword has made the grass wither, and his foot dried up the wells!—So, lady, repose in peace, and take comfort for the journey."

Having finished speaking, she went aside; and taking a large crystal vase, filled with rose-water, poured some of its contents into an equally transparent basin; and, approaching Berenice, who was then seated, held it to her to wash her hands. Berenice smilingly obeyed, and the refreshment was delightful. Her attendant next presented her a towel of the finest linen, embroidered at the ends. That, too, was duly touched by the fair fingers of her master's



daughter; who, turning to the cool little banquet on its carpet board, supposed all these probably customary ceremonies were over. But the unwearied Rhodie, though not immediately perceived, again hung over her, sprinkling her garments with the essence of the rose; while the young novice herself, with her hands stretched over the fruits before her, was breathing an incense far more fragrant than any then wafting around her, the sweet incense of her refectionary prayer, ere she tasted their refreshing juice.

When Berenice rose from her short repast, it was to meet the summoning voice of her father at the fort door. She hastened to give him her hand, to lead her down the declivity; but he smiled, and put it back.

“No;—you are a daughter of the rock! and already have the mounting mind it needs.—Follow me.—Follow me, in spirit as in footstep, and when we travel this way again, thy *menzi!*\* shall not be a ruin.”

Berenice felt that his presence made all perfect to her; and her glance told him so. He nodded his cognizance of that look, with one of answering fondness. But had the breast been opened, and its secret shown;—how strange that such fondness, could be preparing the seal he meditated to stamp on hers.

He hurried rapidly down the steep, hardly regarding the regular path; and she, with her feet now guarded by a slipper of better resistance to the rugged way, followed his careless track with the fleetness of a young deer. When at the bottom, he looked up, and perceiving the course she had taken, he rushed back in some alarm; and holding out his arms to her, she sprang into them from the brow of a crag, she was just going to descend in his own way.

“Berenice, my child!” said he, “I did not mean thus to the letter!”

“Ah, my father!” replied she, “It is so sweet to receive a command from a father—that, I think, I could even find death sweet—if you bade it, and by closing my eyes, I could obey you!”

“You are safe from that!” returned he, leading her towards her mules, (the only part of the travelling train, yet visible in the pass;) “But if you do all, your father may wish you to do—in living for him!—then thy obedience, will be to his head, a crown!—and to his heart—”

\*The eastern term for the spot of repose or refreshment.

He did not complete the sentence.—But had she looked in his countenance, the blaze of his eye had pronounced it—“Vengeance!”

A trumpet blew from a cleft in the pass, and she heard the trampling of horses. “My people are coming forth,” he hastily added; and, placing her within the curtains of her former vehicle, fastened them as before; and bade the mule-drivers proceed. For some short time she was carried forward with nothing to excite her attention from the stillness of her situation, excepting the cradle-like swaying of the carriage itself; and, now and then, the light beating away of the lesser stones in the path, by the hoofs of the careful animals that bore her. But of a sudden, the mules stopped; and an indescribable sound, but most like the rush of wind among trees, seemed near her.—She had scarcely noticed this to herself, when she heard the trumpet blow again; and instantly the full roll of the horses feet, as they swept up the defile, sounded like advancing thunder; and the speed with which they approached, appeared so rapid, and so close to her ear, that had she not been conscious to their being led by her father, she would certainly have expected that her slighter equipage must now be rode down. But even at that very moment of her thinking so,—his voice in loud command, by one word—“halt!”—checked the whole troop. The horses stood firmly still; but breathing indeed with a noise of respiration, proportioned to the extraordinary tension of strength to the muscles, with which they had so instantaneously, as if struck by a wizard’s wand, obeyed the mandate.

Berenice longed to look out. She had never seen an armed host; nor even a full-armed warrior. And now she heard the clang of steel against steel; not indeed with a sort of sounds her fancy had well supposed must be those in mortal combat; but of swords, and spears, and targets, striking against each other, in the accidental movements of the wearers, while re-settling on their horses. The Cavalier rode up to her vehicle; and, without unclasping the curtain, he told her, they were now about entering the formidable valley! but she must be of good courage, and keep herself close; having better than his single arm to defend her; a strong escort, both in front and rear. And, if she needed refreshment before he should stop again for breathing his troop, and that he hoped would not be, till

they were got quite through the valley, she had only to tinkle a little bell which hung in the corner of her canopy, and Rhodie, who kept near on her chamor, would immediately attend.

Without waiting for even his daughter's thanks, he had no sooner spoken this, than she heard the plunge of his horse, in bearing him off again; and, in a few minutes more, his voice echoed down the line—"Forward!"

Then recommenced the clangour, before and behind; the harness of the soldiers, rattling with a dinning violence, in the moment of starting on full march; and the caverned earth, resounding from beneath, as if ready to open under the tread of the martial band. But the first few minutes over, the weapons, and those other parts of the armour of the men which had occasioned so much dissonant noise, seemed to fall into as good discipline as the troop itself; keeping a sort of regular time in their motions, with the measured pace of the horses; and thus the sound of the tramp of the animals, with that from the movements of their riders, gradually assumed a monotony; which might have insensibly lulled a hearer, shut up from seeing what passed, into the half unconsciousness of long reflection, if not of sleeping repose.

Berenice's spirit, quite awakened to the scenes around her, could not so very tranquilly pass hours of confinement in her silken cell; where, cooped like a young butterfly eager for the wing, she longed to break her chrysalis, and fly, if it were possible, from cliff to cliff of the awfully sublime vale, through which she was conscious to now making her sightless journey.

There were some she left behind her in the convent, who had shared her early wishes, one day to behold what she was now in the midst of, and did not see! and they would not have been so scrupulous as to lose the opportunity that offered, by the fair excuse, of seeking the required refreshment. But she had too true a dignity of truth, to descend to subterfuge for any gratification. Besides, she did not question that her father had just reasons for keeping her so hidden; for was he not in every respect, under some appearance of a secrecy equally powerful to that he had held before she joined him?—Even the woman he had given to attend her, seemed to know no more than that he was some great chief. Such being all her husband

would say, when he brought her from her own place in Armenian Courdistan, to await his new lord in the pass of A. lomin.

When Berenice heard this, it was not in reply to any question.—Rhodie had uttered it simply, in expressing her homage to the presiding star, which had so suddenly brought her to the happy fortune of belonging to so *incomparable a lady!*—and *what more!*—so saith the adulation of the east. But the terms, were more of custom, than intended flattery; however, either way, Berenice thought nothing about them, while reclining within the close coverture of her *tachtaraveene*; (for so Rhodie had taught her, to give the name of the country to the vehicle that carried her;) and observing with the eye of her mind at least, the objects it excluded, she listened to every new sound that occurred; whether it were the bleat of the wild goat from the shelving precipices under which she was passing; or the screams of the vulture and other birds of the wilderness, seeking their dead prey among the rocks; or again, their louder disordered cries, when soaring away, affrighted, from the yelling halloos of the fiercer order of men in the band; who, not being allowed time to bring them down with their arms, took the next ferocious pleasure—that of scaring with terror what they had not opportunity to destroy.

Different, indeed, were these notes of nature, both of the inhabitants of the air, and of man that walks the earth, and to whom “dominion over all creatures was committed,” from those she had been habituated to hear in her native mount. But there, the rock was clothed with the olive, and the tender shrub; and the sweet singing birds of peace, might nestle in their branches. There, also, man was more especially taught of Him, before whom even a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice; and the whole balmy-tempered air, seemed breathed of that gentle mercy.

But here, she was in the valley of Jericho! A region of unverdured mountain crags, climbing to the clouds; the fastness of the rebel, and the murderer, from time immemorial! And could it surprise her, that no other winged creature than the carrion hawk, the gier-eagle, and the vulture, should take up their abode there; or, that the very savageness of the scene, should inspire the hideous outcries she heard from her father's guards. His guards! She shuddered at the thought of such protection. But, what

ever they might be, her father's dominion was over them, and she felt herself safe as within her convent walls.

Towards the fourth hour of the journey from the entrance of the valley, when there might be about as much more of it to travel, the horses became exceeding faint for drink; and, an accident having happened, by the bursting of the skins which carried the necessary element, the Cavalier deemed it prudent to venture turning a little out of the direct road, to seek some pools of water, which he knew must be within a mile or two of the spot where he had been apprised of the want. They were to be found among the ruins of one of the ancient aqueducts, which formerly traversed the valley in different quarters; and the arches of the old building, projected the remnants of its once overflowing waters, from the exhaling influence of the sun. Thither, therefore, the band followed their lord.

When arrived at the spot; and the men had led their animals round a bend in the defile to the ruins of the great reservoir, the Cavalier again drew to the side of his daughter's vehicle; and acquainting her with the cause of the delay, told her, she must alight also, for the refreshment of her mules, and face the horrors of the place; which, he added, notwithstanding her boasted heroism, he had wished to spare her.

Berenice had boasted no heroism; nor did she observe the bitter sarcasm, which her mother (now at peace!) might have found, as too familiar, in the voice that said it. She was full of too eager a delight at being invited out, and to look around her, to hear aught else in those words. Her hand was instantly in her father's, to assist her in springing from her little prison.

"There is a cave above, yonder," said he, "where Rhodie is spreading your *menzil*. The way up, though shorter, is worse than that to the old fort; for there never has been a path here: so, I must help you over it. Come, lean on me.—Come!"

At the second *comâ!* Berenice started from the gaze, with which she had stood rooted to the spot, and now did as she was commanded; but, while hastily ascending the rock, she almost immediately looked back again to the stupendous scene which had so transfixed her; and, in the act, stumbled and fell. Her father, by having hold of her arm, prevented greater mischief; but with much of a chafed im-

patience in his tone, he requested her to measure her boldness to her strength!

Since Berenice had breathed the breath of life, never before had she heard such a tone addressed to her. But a tone of unkindness needs no interpreter; it speaks every language, direct to the heart; is understood at once; and, piercingly, Berenice felt it. Obeying, indeed, the impulse of her father's arm in raising her from the crag over which she had fallen, but yet remaining on her own knees, and clinging to his, while he still held her in drawing her from the ground, she looked up in his face, and saw it was irritated and frowning.

"Oh!" cried she, in a voice where all her tender, imploring soul spoke, "my father, pardon me! I have offended you!" And with the last sentence, her face, too conscious of its distress, dropped upon the knee she clasped.

His heart was smote. Yes; the parent's heart, was then smote. For a moment, he abhorred himself, for such ever-returning, remorseless harshness to female love and softness, whenever it came under his power; and lifting her from her knees, with a melting tenderness, of which his nature was fully as capable as of the sternest severity, he folded her to his bosom.

"Berenice," said he, "thy father has vipers here! They sting him, like traitors, at times he least thinks of! Therefore, to my child shall I say it?—Pardon!—when the venom may chance to touch thee."

This from her father! the lofty-miened cavalier, before whom her protectress had trembled; the brave, the noble; for so, with all his mystery, he had announced himself to be! This appeal to his daughter; this revelation, now to her, that he had some bitter hidden griefs; and, above all, the tone and manner, with which it was made, seemed to his child, to melt her soul into his, and happy even in her sorrow, she falteringly murmured:—"Oh, my father! do but love me, and let me comfort thee; and Berenice will be blest as one in heaven!"

"Child! child!" cried he, his fine countenance visited by many long estranged emotions; "thou wilt transform me!"

"No, no!" returned she, not for a thousand worlds, would I have my beloved father other, than he is to me!"

"We must settle that hereafter,—bold one!" cried he,

now with a smile, and striving to recover himself while hurrying her up the steep; but he did not find it quite so easy, to stifle the parent, as the husband; and, holding her still close to his bosom in their ascent, when they arrived at the mouth of the cave, he turned her round, and added, "Now view the scene, if you wish; and tell me what you think of it?"

She looked as he directed, and was speechless; but he read the answer to his question, in the mute wonder of her eyes. Cliffs on cliffs were before her; mountain over mountain, as if they were scaling the very skies; for clouds rested on their summits; nay, not only on their summits, but seemed rolling a measureless space beneath them, to the lower cliffs; and at the top of one of the craggy pinnacles, in this second range of heights, something moved and glittered:

"What is that you see yonder?" inquired her father, grasping her fast, while he pointed to the animated speck, at so dizzy an elevation.

"A bird," she answered; "perhaps a golden eagle, by the brightness of the wing!"

"It is a man," returned he; "one of the native robbers of these wilds; and he holds a naked scimitar."

"God defend us!" cried Berenice, suddenly shrinking, as if even into her protector's heart.

"What! from a single man?—and at such a distance?" exclaimed he; "my little coward, at last!"

"Oh, my father; from every thing may he defend us!" cried she, now shudderingly turning from the sight; and the cavalier following the quick impulse of her arm, silently led her into the cave, while he gloomily said within himself, "She is right! It is from a single man she may most need such defence; if, indeed, the Omnipotent deigns regard to the puling antipathies of prejudice!"

He seated her on the cushions already disposed by the alacrity of her careful attendant, and then left her, to hasten the mounting of his troop. Berenice took no long time in refreshing herself; but she was glad to find leisure enough for rallying her mind from the shock it had received on beholding, for the first time, a human being, though even at so inaccessible a distance, whom she knew to be an actually reprobated man!—A creature self-abandoned to lawless guilt; and, therefore, to perdition! This it was, that had

shuddered her pure spirit ; not the panic apprehension of any female fear.

Rhodie's national vivacity, which seized every opportunity for speech, assisted the recovery of Berenice to her former unalloyed feelings in the contemplation of the wild mountain region around her, by making a rapid, and Asiatically picturesque comparison between the scenes before them, and the tremendous peaks and gulfs of her native Courdistan. While she wept and laughed, during her parallel, she drew Berenice again to the mouth of the cave, pointing out the features of resemblance, or dissimilarity ; and in each marking description, Berenice was made to distinguish the different parts of the awful whole, which had so overwhelmed her faculties, till they had been centered in the more terrific horror of beholding man as he became the direst ruin in the world.

Now that blot against the fair sky was gone, and Berenice gazed, with an expanding soul, on heights and depths, down dark abyss-like ravines, and aloft the mountain's towering pinnacles, flooded with light ; till entirely absorbed in the one intensity of her sublime conceptions, she inwardly exclaimed,—“O, Father ! whither shall man go from thy spirit ; or whither shall he go from thy presence ?—If he climb up to the heavens, thou art there ! If he go down to the uttermost parts of the earth, thou art there also ! In height, and in depth, thy hand shall lead him, and thy right hand shall hold him !”

Rhodie was thinking more of her own little mountain ærie in Courdistan, during all this, than of attending to her commanded duty of preserving the person of her lady sacred from all strangers' eyes, particularly those of the different rude mercenaries her husband might be obliged to hire, to add their security to his lord's escort :—and she was only recalled to a sense of her present negligence by the sudden shout of a savage admiration, which burst on her ear from the bottom of the steep, immediately below where she and her charge were standing. She looked down, and beheld about half a dozen of the wildest of these barbarian supernumeraries, not yet mounted, but armed at all points in the rugged harness of their tribe, gazing upwards.

That their eyes were fixed on her master's daughter, she did not doubt ; and so it was. Berenice having gone



forth almost unconsciously, was without her velling mantle; and her matchless beauty, added to the richness of her dress, might well astonish the senses of men unaccustomed to either, when presented so unexpectedly to their sight. But in the next instant, comprehending who she must be, whom they were thus presuming to profane by looking at, they threw themselves at once prostrate on the earth, with their faces buried in the dust. Meanwhile Rhodie, even more in dread than themselves of the consequence of such unintended sacrilege, drew her lady back into the cave; and struck as it were suddenly dumb, silently and hastily disposed Berenice's veil, ready for the summons of her father.

But when the poor culprit really heard his steps ascending, she ran from the wicker, into which she was repacking the travelling furniture, and with clasped hands implored Berenice "not to notice to the chief, that her face had been seen of the men! For," added she, "though my lord would not bow himself down, to look on his handmaid, to reprove her, Orodes, my husband, would punish; and I should be stricken on the eyes, and be banished my lady's presence!"

The woman's tears, bore evidence to the sincerity of her apprehensions; and Berenice, with a new shock at the fierceness of the people, even closest to her beloved father's person, was the more earnest in assuring her petitioner, that no information should be volunteered by her, that could ever implicate her safety with her husband. Rhodie had scarcely expressed her thanks, with the fervour of her country, kneeling, and kissing the hem of her mistress's garment, before the Cavalier's head was descried by his daughter, just rising the steep, to the level of the cave.

In the next minute he entered it.—Speed was in his looks, but not alarm. Yet he had found it might be necessary to get his train out of the defile, ere the bandit, he had discerned on the peak, could possibly station an ambush in his way. Hence it was not prudent to allow any time for ceremony, with respect to the moment in which his daughter should resume her vehicle, but she must immediately be led to it, although the ground was yet full of his remounting guards.

Berenice hastened to obey; though now, indeed, shrinking into herself at thought of the gaze of so many lawless

eyes. But while descending the rock leaning on the arm of her father, she gladly recollected she was now too closely concealed under her large thick veil, covering her from head to foot, to be distinguished from her attendant, Rhodie; who, wrapped in the same sort of mantle, was hurrying down the cliff, directly behind her.

Berenice, however, did not then risk a second stumble from the revered arm she held, by venturing a glance beyond the verge of her footsteps. For, though veiled, she might have looked around her; there being openings in that peculiar garment of the east, which permits sight to the wearer. But on arriving at the side of her mules, while she stood only one-half second during the Cavalier's unlooping the curtain of the vehicle for her admission, her eye had taken in the whole strange and warlike scene. The troop, in two bands; her vehicle between the divisions; part, armed as she had seen in pictured soldiers of the crusade, with corselet, helmet, and the red cross pennon at their lances. These were the men, whose managed steeds in full charge, had obeyed the one word of the Cavalier, as if arrested by the touch of a spring. The other horsemen were of the mercenary tribes from the neighbouring valleys; who, if not hired to be protectors, would most probably have issued forth as robbers. Only some of these were mounted, the greater number being on foot; but all were dark, bearded, ruffian-like men; arrayed in every variety of barbarian defence, and with weapons of all countries, from the short poniard-knife, to the long spear, and heavy battle-axe.

While turning from this rapid glance, to be placed within her little ark, she felt the refuge of its security, from even the contemplation of so appalling a race; and, while her father, was fastening up its entrance on her, she thought to herself, "Surely, of like aspect to these men, must have been those among whom the poor traveller to Jericho fell, and was stripped by them, and robbed, and wounded unto death! Ah!" added she, "the Christian must come to behold this mountain world of desolation, and the men who haunt it, to feel the full power of the Samaritan's charity, to that lonely traveller!—to understand, that the vale of Jericho is not merely a place of sublimity, and sacred recollections, but of yet abiding horrors!—making, indeed, the evil of man, bear a good he wills not; even showing

witnesses, if need were, of the verity of that book which told of such things, eleven hundred years ago!"

The voice of her father again rung from rank to rank, and the train proceeded.

But in spite of the cavalier's unceasing exertions to pass the whole of this formidable valley, ere the shadows of evening could render its objects indistinct, the sun had been half an hour sunk, before his troop had quite cleared the last precipice pointing to Jericho. For it had been along such paths, and of the most imminent peril from every possible circumstance that could render such roads difficult, that Berenice's mules had to accomplish this half of their mountain duty. Twice, her father had approached her vehicle, during these last four hours, and warned her to keep close and still; for the smallest stir on her part, if in some parts of the road, might disconcert her mules, and thence endanger her life. Berenice, after this, did not require sight, to show her the perilous tracks she was travelling. Her ear told her, by the echo of her mules feet, and other sounds from the bands in front and rear, whether her vehicle were descending the hollow of some deep abyss; or taking its course along the narrow shelving path of a precipice, pressed by a wall of perpendicular rock, fathoms high, on one side; and, on the other, by a gulf, fathoms deep, in blackening darkness.

From all this, therefore, Berenice, was as gladly thankful to depart, as she had been rapturously delighted on entering it; when her father, for the last time that evening, approached her vehicle, and opening it, told her she might alight, and take rest till morning, for she had passed the valley of Jericho!

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“What, with this star-like nobleness!—I am rapt,  
And cannot cover such a monstrous bulk  
Of direful vision, with any form of words.—”

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But it is not to take you the literal pilgrimage of Berenice, from this land or the other; to lead you, with a traveller's accuracy, from city to city; from country to country; that this record is made. It is the pilgrimage of

her life, I am to tell ; from event to event, from crisis to crisis, of the leading circumstances which stamped its destiny for weal or wo.

Hence I shall not expatiate, in detail, on the innocent pleasure, nay more, the animated interest, with which in full faith that whithersoever her only parent were conducting her, it was to a home of happiness with him, she followed his steps through regions, of which she had never heard the name ; or passed, in sight of others, precious to record, and to the heart. For may not the place where a man's "honour hath dwelt," be regarded, in after time, even as a part of himself? something like the body, which once held the great, the glorious soul—the actual living being! and which mortal tenement, though laid in the dust, still, even by the very tradition that there it lies, shows some monument to his memory!

Days and nights were thus passed by Berenice, in her long, long journey. Sometimes, when the weather was particularly pleasant, and the scene more than usually remote from observation, she rode a beautiful animal, called the *aton*; of the ass species, but for its grace of form and rarity, reserved for the purchase of persons of quality alone. It was docile, and spirited; and Berenice enjoyed the freedom, and exhilaration, that mode of travel occasionally afforded her. But most often she was confined to her *tachtaraveene*; reclining, with the curtains closed, or in part thrown open, accordingly as the points of the road invited her attention, or required seclusion.

Thus, having spent the first night of her travels, in a little village at the northern extremity of the terrific valley; and set forth again next morning, after the wilder companies of their escort were dismissed, she looked aside, from under her opened canopy, on the silent, long-extending ruins of the city of Jericho's self; lying, in vast mounded heaps, like the common graves of some mighty battle field. And silent as those ruins themselves, she moved on; hearing no sound disturbing the stillness, save the light patter of the humble order of animals, which bore her over that way; where once the armies of princes had marched, and blew their trumpets, and the walls of the city fell with a great noise!

Then eastward, and northward, and southward, lay the great vale of its name; stretched, one way, to the sea of

Gennesareth; in the other, to that of Gomorrah; in the centre flowed Jordan; and the plain of Gilgal led to it. Berenice was allowed by her father to walk out upon that sacred plain. She was permitted to gather dates from the palms, that grew there; to fill a little cruise, with some of the balm, ever distilling from its abundant groves of balsamic trees, and which emitted an aromatic air, deemed salubrious to all who breathed it. The sun was setting, when she looked back on the ruins of Jericho; and its glory rested yet on the solitary plain of Gilgal.

But it was in declining from the wide level of the great vale of the Jordan; which may be said to extend from the mountains of Jerusalem and Jericho, westward, and from the mountains of the Arabian desert, eastward; that, while gently descending into the wooded region of the immediate banks of the river itself, Berenice became wholly absorbed in that fix<sup>d</sup>, but serene contemplation of the beautiful and august around her, which soothes, while it delights and elevates the soul.

The thickets through which she journeyed for nearly an hour, opened into glades, or traversed each other, in every romantic form. Green with the richest foliage, and varied with blossoms of every hue and fragrance, from the silver plane, to the golden glow of the chesnut; from the scarlet pomegranate, to the snow-white thorns, which bear fruit and flowers. But the shades of evening were drawing their blending shadows over all; and the imperceptibly descending dews hung on every leaf, twinkling their little orbs to the just emerging stars. The melodious *tippor* began their twilight song. The nightingales of Persian groves could not be more sweet; the turtles of her own Olivet had never been more tender!—Berenice whispered to her heart, "Can this be the wilderness of Judea? Oh, sweet land of promise, how lovely are thy borders!"

And then she remembered, that a wilderness need not be a desert. The one being nature, left to its own uncultured, unrestrained luxuriance; the other being nature uncultivated, sterile and desolate.

"It was night when she passed the Jordan: a fine moonlight night. The river was then low, but, as usual, rapid in its current; and the float, which was to carry her light vehicle, with herself, and her father across, took them down the stream, much to the southward of the spot where

they had embarked. The cavalier stood, leaning against the side of her canopy, during the whole of their brief voyage. There was a repose, a heavenly repose on every object, above and below; that made her wish, so to glide down the stream of time with him for ever; and in a low voice, as if she feared to disturb the sleeping shadows around her, she remarked to him on the mild splendour of the night; on the solemn expanse of plain, stretched beneath its starry concave; on the awful, yet beautiful stillness of the river's banks; but more than all, on the equally peaceful and exquisite happiness she felt in knowing she was then floating on that sacred flood, where all that was most precious to memory, had passed, and repassed, often and often! And that it should be with her father, was the circumstance that made, what otherwise would only have been pleasant, happiness to her!"

"It is a holy place!" cried she, in her tenderest voice; "and—oh, my father, bless me!—Bless me here, my father!"—and her arms were fondly stretched to his neck. "Never, yet, has your daughter received that treasure from your sacred lips!"

The cavalier was more than surprised, he was astounded by this filial petition, so earnestly, so persuasively made; but most at the repugnance he again felt, to utter the simple words she requested. He did, however, attempt it; but the attempt almost choked him. There was a something within him, that held a curb in his mouth; and drops stood on his brow, very different from those which now glittered on her cheek.

"What!" said he, within himself; "is my soul in league with my enemies?—But it shall not be!" And bending his head to his daughter, he kissed her spotless forehead with his burning lips.

"Berenice," said he, "I reserve my blessing, to one great crisis of your fate and mine. It is near at hand. If you obey me, then, and ask it of me, you shall have it!"

In the moment of pronouncing the word *shall*, with the determined emphasis of the promise he intended, he looked again on her face—and thought it appeared with the hue of death; her eyes, too, were closed. "Berenice," cried he, starting her from the cushion on which she had dropt in awful wonder at her father's reply.

"My father?" she answered; and, without further

utterance, pressed his hand to her lips and heart; more eloquently than words, declaring the vow of obedience breathing there.

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During the remainder of their journey, ere they approached the mountains of Arabia, towards which the cavalier at last informed his daughter he was directing their course, the magnificent high lands of Gilead were seen afar off, for many days, on their left. The loftiest range, cresting in the sky, and clothed with forest; the lower, bosomed with vineyards; and below, spread the rich pastures, where the lowing herds of Bashan once grazed; where the sons of Israel fed their father's flocks, when he crossed the brook of Peniel in "two bands!"

Onward still, and without accident, went the light train of the cavalier, by night and by day. For he had long dismissed his military troop, to meet him at a certain appointed spot, further in his journey. The common mercenaries of the country were deemed sufficient guards in the open tracts he was now to tread, before he reached the barrier mountains between these fertile plains and the sterile passes to the Arabian desert.

Till nearly approached the borders of those hills, rest and refreshment had been found for Berenice in villages; or, where they were not, under the canopy of beautiful groves, among the wild wooded solitudes of nature; or beneath the grottoed side of some natural fountain shaded with palm-trees; where Rhodie would spread the mossy grass with her glittering canisters; filling them with fruits, cooled in the limpid spring; from which she also drew the grateful beverage sparkling in the cups.

But, on farther progress, the verdure became scant, the earth assumed an arid rigidity. No trees were visible, save at vast distances; and the cavalier told his daughter, she was now going to taste a little of Arabia; but not, yet, Arabia Felix!

The barren mountains before her, towered naked, stony, and glaring, into the burning sky. In parts, showing peaks of an intolerable whiteness; in others, pile rose over pile, lurid and red, as if fire smouldered within; while beyond,

the gray-streaked rocks, uniting with the blanched cliffs above, appeared as if already consumed to cinder.

Through these was to be her path! Berenice still felt no dread of where she was going. This might be the border of Arabia Deserta! But there was an Arabia Felix beyond it! Her father had pronounced the word! A land of the shepherd, the pasture, and the flock; of frankincense, and the myrrh groves; such a land as the Baroness de Hardres had described, as lying beyond those mountains! And she knew she could not reach the one without passing through the others. Beside, in entering these sterile tracts, she was going to behold those very wilds of Hagar and Ishmael, she had so often most ardently, and hopelessly wished to see near, when descried from afar, like fleecy clouds on the horizon, from her walks on Olivet. She, therefore, begged to have the curtain of her vehicle undrawn, and gave herself up to the full delight of seeing that she was then actually in Arabia.

She saw the camels crossing the wide unobstructed plain, at different distances from her. Some, with bales of merchandise heaped on their backs; others with women and children seated on them, wrapped so thickly in their large woollen chadres, as to appear almost like bales of goods themselves. The men, in loose blanket garments, of the same fabric, with huge staffs or spears in their hands, walked by the side of each camel; rather seeming the companions than the drivers of this noble domestic animal of the desert; which knelt down for its load, rose and moved on again, with a mild majesty in its "docility," that certainly commanded the respect, while its usefulness engaged the love of its simple masters.

Farther off, almost on the verge of the horizon to the left, she perceived one of the transitory encampments of the Arabs; a throng of black tents, studding the yellow plain in that quarter. She pointed them out to her father; asking some questions concerning them. He told her they were probably of some marauding band, from the disposition of their lines; but it was neither with them, nor such as them, with whom he would seek her that night's menzil. The one he intended to occupy, lay in the gorge of an old pass of the hills to the right. A spot he expected to have wholly to himself; being the remains of a caravansary, which, lying much out of the present most frequented track,



had been long deserted. Thither he had despatched Orodes and his wife, to prepare the lodging.

But when the pair, with their requisite attendants, reached the place, they did not find it solitary. The Sheik of a small tribe had taken up his residence there ; and the people of another traveller he had just received, were leading a considerable number of horses to manger, in the centre of the court ; a spot always appropriated in caravansaries for that purpose. These inns of the multitudinous east, being totally unlike those of this little western isle, I shall pause a moment to describe them. They consist of a large quadrangular building ; something indeed like the internal appearance of our cloisters ; but with high walls, and towers at the angles for defence. The gate, too, is under an embattled porch, within the four walls ; and built against them, are usually two ranges of cell-like apartments, one over the other, vaulted at top, but open in front to the centre court, or quadrangle ; which, from the nature of the building, and its extent, can have no roof but the canopy of heaven. In the middle of that square, a sort of low pillar stands, round which the cattle of the occupiers are foddered, and the goods of travelling merchants disposed. When these caravansaries are in frequented use, they are usually in charge of persons appointed by the power most in command of the district ; and then they are well provided with provisions for purchase, and regularly closed at night. But when forsaken, like this of the pass of *Chical*, they present nothing but naked walls, and a free entrance to any roamer of the desert ; at least, while they are vacant ; but possession of any place or thing, within the unconquered borders of these independent sons of the waste, made it their own.

Hinel, the Sheik of the tribe Orodes found in the caravansary, was then its lord ; and in the manner of his country, which has no word for denying hospitality to those who seek it, he listened to the request of the man for a night's lodging for his master, and his master's daughter, and their train, just following. Shelter was scarcely asked, before it was granted ; and the best preparations were ordered to be made, which the time, and now doubly-crowded place would admit. But the other traveller no sooner heard of the expected arrival, and that a lady was with it, than he commanded his own people to give up the quarters the Sheik

had already allotted to him as the best, and resign them in favour of the strangers!

Meanwhile, night shrouded every object. And, a rare occurrence at that season of the year, it happened to be deepened in darkness by a sudden overclouding, and a weight of vapours, which hung down from the clouds to the earth, like curtains of black mist. There was also a shrill shrieking of the wind, either from them, or the fissures in the rocks of the adjacent hills, which gave a horrid, almost living presence, to the gathering storm; and, while the night drew on so gloomily,—the first that had not shone with moon and stars, since Berenice set forth with her father,—she listened anxiously for the tread of his horse; calculating how near, or how far it might be from the side of her mules; and, often she spoke to him through the thin silk of her canopy, merely to feel protection in the sound of his voice.

A throbbing, fearful joy, was, therefore, in her heart, when—after hearing him order her muleteers to stop, “for they had reached the brushwood fence of the caravansary;” and after being aware of the guiding touch of his hand on the bridle of the mules themselves, leading them gently into the court of the building—he opened the curtain of her vehicle, and took her thence in his arms.

Still all was dark, profoundly dark; but she heard the buzz of many voices around her; wild tones, and of the guttural Arabic! This was not what her father had told her to expect. But she was with him;—and in silence she leaned upon his breast.

“My child!” said he, “you are alarmed! The place is, indeed, pre-occupied; but the people are harmless, though poor, and have assigned a menzil for you. I shall carry you to it.”

However internally assured, Berenice continued to tremble from agitation, and gratefully clung to her father; clung to him, but rather in affection than fear; so soothing was the tone in which he spoke, so paternally tender the manner in which he bore her in his arms; not permitting her to touch the ground with her foot, till she reached the vaulted chamber prepared for her repose. Orodes led the way, with a small lamp, or rather lantern; and, its chance ray falling on different objects while passing, Berenice now and then caught a glimpse of a swarthy fierce countenance,

close to her father's shoulder ; or of some of the gaping black hollows of the range to which she was going, marked by the gleam striking on the rough-hewn edges of the walls dividing the compartments. In the depth of one or two of them, a lamp glimmered at the bottom, and human figures huddled round it ; while at various distant spots in the dark court, similar lights were visible, but flitting about like the meteors of a morass, without any apparent holder ; so thick was the gloom of the night, and the incumbent cloud. The air felt unusually sultry, with a penetrating sulphureous smell, which made the cavalier hasten to get his daughter through it. When Orodes brought him to the arched cell appointed for her lodging, he was pleased to find an ample hair-cloth curtain protecting its entrance.

On stepping within, the faithful Courd advanced to meet her mistress. The cavalier laid his daughter down on the cushions ready disposed for her, and for a few minutes seated himself by her side. Rhodie had spread the adjoining carpet with her tray of refreshment, and set her lamp in cheerful blaze in the midst of dried fruits and other delicacies she had culled from the travelling store. She approached, with a little cake and a cup of warm milk. Berenice silently waved them away ; but her father saw her extreme fatigue, and feared she might become ill. For though she smiled when answering him, her voice was faint, and her cheek pale ; he therefore took the service from the Courd, and himself gave it to his daughter.

“ Cheer thee, my love,” said he ; “ refresh thyself, and take repose. To-morrow night thy menzil shall have no rude voices to affright thee ; and the day after, thy path will be smoothed to thy home.”

The kindling, the resplendent countenance with which he uttered this, and looked on her while she obeyed him,—so implicitly, indeed, in all things, that he felt as if her very soul was in his hands, to mould it as he pleased,—shot such a brilliancy of light around it, that the Courd, drawing back, stared at her master in wondering admiration of a change in his appearance she could not at all comprehend. She usually saw him reserved, haughty, wrapped within himself, and folded in his mantles. His palmer cowl, had indeed, long been discarded ; but the hood of his mantle had fallen from his shoulder, and the sable cap he generally wore under it, he had laid aside, on entering, to cool his brow ;

that brow, now so full of a magnificent expression of conscious triumphant power. For, there was much more in his thoughts at that moment than his daughter could form any guess of; and again he shone, as he did in the oratory of the Commandress, with the youth of eighteen years renewed over him.

Berenice, therefore, gazed on her father, as she had never seen him before. Effulgent, it might be said, in the illumination of greatness within; in the splendour of a form and features which had hardly ever been matched in mortal man; he was then standing, and looking down upon her; and, with such a power of proud affection in his eyes, that she felt the exulting emotion contagious.—“Yes!” cried her swelling heart, within itself, “my father sees in me something he deems worthy his rarely-bestowed love! His love! How can I ever deserve it? What, of created earth, ever appeared so like some dazzling being just lighted from the heavens!” But had she been asked, she could not have said, “It seems an angel I behold!” Had Berenice been a heathen, she would have answered, “It is a demi-god!”

In this moment of her soul’s wonder, almost her soul’s idolatry, Berenice thought on her mother; and she felt within herself, how certainly, when separated from such a lord of her heart, she must have sunk under the bereavement; and left, as a world without its sun, have perished. “Even were I, now that I have seen him, ever parted from my father—Oh! how could I live!”

Alas! Berenice; a daughter must live, and does so, with a better comforter than any human heart, after many more grievous woes than a justly-beloved parent’s absence or death.

Orodes’ harsh voice, but in the subdued tone of respect for the presence within, was heard from without the black canvass, summoning his wife to bear back a message to their lord. When told, it was to inform him that the Sheik awaited his company at the supper he had spread for him, and his other noble guest, at his own board; the cavalier instantly replaced his large furred cap on his head, and folding himself round in his mantle, was again almost as invisible as his daughter when wrapped in her Asiatic veil.—“Farewell, Berenice,” said he, “sleep soundly till morn, and meet me with roses on thy cheek, bright as thy smiles!”

And the smiles were indeed bright ; the brightness of a happy, adoring child, while she looked on and listened to him. He left the chamber. But did Berenice sleep ?—The first watch of the night passed away, and yet her eyes had not closed. She had been thinking of her father, of her mother. She did not marvel that the Commandress had given her so appalling an image of his wayward humours ; for, who else than a wife or daughter could ever know the power he held, even in one moment, to heal the most bleeding wound they could inflict ?—A charm in himself, of delighting, to the oblivion of every other object ; a melting, cherishing affection, whenever it poured itself out on wife or child, that was Lethé to every remembered unkindness. Hence, though Berenice could not have been so many weeks in travel with her father, without having often shuddered at the despotism with which he ordered, and even constrained every creature, man or beast, to obey his will ; though she frequently, herself, shrunk under his frowning glance, or trembled at some sudden sternness in his command to herself ; or, what was still more stabbing to her full, confiding nature, met the abrupt scorn of his eye in answer to some gentle appeal of tenderness :—yet a look, a word, such as he could direct, such as he could utter, dispelled every shadow from over her ; and again she was at his feet, in glad, grateful tears ; again he held her in his arms, his cheek pressed to her's, in the fond, parental emotion of a self-accusing spirit ; or speaking, with smiles of a tenderness no sense of past injury could resist !—“ Ah, my father !” cried she, closing her meditations on him, “ thou art omnipotent over thy child !”

With thoughts like these she sunk to sleep. But she did not lie long in this bland state of even visionary happiness—for she dreamt of her father—ere she was awakened by she knew not what ; yet, when quite roused to her recollections, she supposed it must have been by some noise connected with the long-impending storm ; which then began to stir in distant howlings, as if coming onward from above, though still far away, over the heavy, billowy clouds. While listening to its awful, yet, in her sheltered state, perhaps solemnly tranquillizing sounds, others of a different nature caught her ear ;—a low murmur of voices, as if very near her. She raised her head from her pillow and looked around. Her chamber was perfectly still ; and she saw

Rhodie lying profoundly asleep in its opposite corner, with her little watch lamp glimmering in its shade beside her.

Berenice began to think she must have mistaken some sudden moaning of the wind for voices; and was bending her head, to lay it quietly on her pillow again, when the sounds of speaking returned; and, though still very low, they appeared approaching her. She turned her face as her ear directed, and then distinctly heard them from behind a portion of the black hair-cloth, and close to where her bed was placed, which lined the sides of the apartment like a tent. Alarmed at such extraordinary proximity, but without venturing to move from her pallet, she put out her hand to cautiously feel whether there were any passage between the rough arras and the wall; and gladly she found the hard stones close at its back, excepting only at a few narrow and jagged hollows, evidently the effects of the common ruin of the place; and, probably for the sake of hiding their dreary appearance, had been covered by the hospitable care of the Sheik. One of the largest of these gaps opened directly behind the canvass nearest to Berenice's pillow. Hence, the quieter she lay, the more distinctly she distinguished every word from the speakers, whether they sat or stood.

But who were those speakers?—With her soul conjured to her ear, she heard her father talking with Orodes. It could not be said that Berenice listened; for in the moment she discerned his voice, she became petrified to the spot on which she lay; and blessed would she have been never to have heard what he then uttered,—never to have heard again in this world. He appeared to be answering something the Court had spoken during their approach to the head of the chamber, but which she had only caught in its muttering sounds. What her father replied, came only too distinctly to her ear.

“Orodes,” said he, “when I am resolved, Heaven may disappoint, but it shall never deter me. I do not, therefore, usually parly in my commands; but, I repeat to you, the man is in my way; and, if you mean to profit by your fortune in coming into my service, you must serve me as I will! Do your duty now, and the reward I shall give, will not leave you what the vizier has left you,—a despised renegade slave!”

Orodes' voice, in reply, sounded like the growl of the

tiger :—“Having become a renegade,” said he, “I need not be suspected of much fear of Heaven, in the doing of anything else ; but Heaven shows signs ; and I don’t like the night : the wind blows through the moon’s horns, which never yet boded good to our mountain ambushes ; at least, it never did to me !”

“Let it bode ill to the life of my enemy,” returned his master, “and the spell shall be broke to you !—But, are you a man, Orodes ? A brave Courd, who has burst the trammels of the Armenian saints, and their military chief to boot !—and do you talk of fearing phantoms ?”

“Yes, I do fear ;” again muttered Orodes, “but it is the man I am to murder.—Young as he is, he has the strength of a lion, and the eye of a lynx. If he once gets a stroke at me, your secret will be betrayed, for I shall be slain !”

“Dastard !” was the furious reply to this ; and the next sounds were as if the enraged speaker moved with some desperate action ; for the voice of Orodes immediately appeared to answer as if from the ground, where he had cast himself prostrate.

“Only, my lord, have patience with me !” exclaimed he, “and if you command me, when I have told the reason of my fear, then even you must abide the issue ; I will obey.”

“Speak on,” returned the inexorable accents of the cavalier ; “but stand and let me see it is a man, and not a reptile, with whom I deign to parley—whom I have power to crush or raise !”

The trembling wretch, cowering indeed under the yoke his vices had drawn upon his manhood, stood up, and falteringly commenced. But as he proceeded, the subject re-kindled some glow of worth, even in his debased soul, and he spoke like a man who had once been a soldier.

“Slave, though I am now !” said he, “hardly a year ago I was leader of an armed band, and then I first saw this crusade knight. Oh, my lord, had you seen him, as I saw him, in the port of Tyre !—The siege had been long, when Baldwin of Edéssa, now of Jerusalem, proposed to attack the island-citadel in every quarter from the sea, and during the unlikely period of a threatened storm. But to ensure success to so bold a scheme, it was necessary to become master of the mole, which connects the old rock-fortress with the beleaguered city on the mainland ;—and the leader sent on the enterprise, was this very Canute de

Beaufort ; with orders to seize the post under cover of the night, and maintain it at all extremities, till Baldwin should bring up his galleys at break of day, and the rock be carried by escalade. But the night was not a covering shield : when he reached the point of his attack, it had let the heavens loose upon him ; yet he resolutely effected his purpose, though it blew more than a threatened tempest. The surges of the boiling ocean beat against the ancient buttresses of that ever memorable causeway, as if it were then to be uprooted from its foundations.—The battlements seemed reeling into the sea, in the moment he planted the Christian standard. We gave the hallo of victory, no ear could then hear but our own ; and stood each man to his station, with the temporary shelter of the parapets. But the storm raged more and more, coming on from the north like the huge leviathan's self, devouring earth and sea. The shore was rent into yawning gulfs ; the rocks were riven from their beetling cliffs, by the towering, plunging waves ; and the flood, unimpeded, poured towards the mole—on it—over it, in resistless waves.—The soldiers of De Beaufort native, or of the crusade, all fled their posts. The floats, which had borne them to the danger, were instantly made the instruments of their escape. He called to them by every hope or dread in man to return to their duty ; to abide where they were commanded ; but authority had then no power ; the ocean threatened louder ; and he was left alone. Morning was just glimmering from the east, and the whole was discerned from the crusade lines on the shore. A cry issued thence for him to follow and save himself ! and a float was sent back upon the boiling waves for that purpose. No herald pennon of command was raised on the shore, neither appeared there any on the float. Beaufort, therefore waved it off with his hand ; his single voice could no longer be heard through the contending elements ; and pointing with his sword to the standard of the cross, which his own arm had planted that very night on the signal pillar of the mole ; he was seen the next moment climbing its shelving sides to the highest part he could reach—the spot where he had fixed the standard ; and there, with his scarf, lashing himself to the brazen rings of the column : he no sooner had accomplished it, than he stood, without appearance of other movement, awaiting, in calm courage, his death by the waves, or his recall from his desperate station by the mes-



senger of him who had commanded him to *hold it at all extremities!* But Baldwin having fallen back with his galleys, within shelter of the nearest cape, knew nothing of the earl's personal danger. While the garrison of Tyre, seeing from their tower that they had not only been dispossessed of their mole bulwark during that tremendous night, but that the victor was since abandoned by his men from terror of the elements; and observing the invincible courage with which he stood at the post, all others had deserted, these veterans justly considered that his life was worth them all, and determined not to await the chance of the waves sparing it."

"Orodes, you have spoken it!" sounded from the lips of his master.— "But go on!"

The Court proceeded:

"The surge had risen, foaming to his breast, when the Tyrians sent out a strong armed boat, from a gully to the south of the mole, to attack him. Flesh could hardly stand the sight;—a crew, against a single man! yet it was a glorious spectacle! every hand that aimed a blow at him, seemed dismembered by his parrying sword; and the sea was red with blood around, while not a scratch appeared on his invulnerable body.—Another boat came out,—fuller, fiercer armed.—But now the earl was not to fight alone. His mighty spirit had conquered more than the desperate onset of his enemies;—the alarm of nature, in the men who had left him!—Float followed float from the shore, and rallied round him.—Boat followed boat, from the gully of the city;—and the conflict became man to man; till the bleeding death-struggle, sinking in the whelming waves, again proclaimed the star of Beaufort.—For even in the instant of this new victory, one sweeping surge of the main, rolling its heavy billows over the then invisible mole, towards the city gate, burst it inwards. Then was the voice of Beaufort heard over the water!—

"On, Christian soldiers!—Heaven opens the infidel's gate! Tyre is yours!"

"He had already thrown himself upon the float nearest to the vanished point of the flag-staff. He led the way, to enter sword in hand, the awful breach that ocean-rush had made; and—I need not say more! Tyre was ours, before Baldwin reached the shore. Can I, then,—one among the many who quailed that night,—raise my single arm, against the conqueror of storms, and waves, and hosts of men?"

“Orodes,” returned the Cavalier, in a voice so deep, so profoundly deep and dreadful, it seemed spoken from the depths of his soul; ay, from the very depths of the grave of man’s perdition! “I have listened to you, but to confirm my purpose. Had this man been less than he is, he would have been unworthy the sentiment within me, that demands his death. Observe me; he is one who occupies a place where I must stand alone. Therefore, at a word, say he dies this night by your hands; or I shall find some readier executioner!”

The instant rising of the stern speaker, seemed to pronounce, he would hear no farther parley; and the Court’s voice gaspingly answered,—“I obey! But if he wake, while my dagger is over him—”

“Coward, wretch, worthless of my confidence and its reward!” retorted the cavalier, “the man has been locked in sleep these two hours, in the very next chamber to this, and alone, without a guard; but not as ye left him on the rock, with all his senses in arms about him; nor are there people gazing on, to fly and save him! Solitary ruins alone, surround his present post of danger; and yet you fear to hang over that sleeping lion one moment—and, he is, no more. I would do the deed myself, could I bend my manhood to an act of such poor courage; and it does not suit my policy, to dare him to the open field. But—”

“Nay, my lord, name no other servant to your will!” abruptly interrupted the Court; “I will do it: and I have thought of a means to do it surely. I have a noose yonder, among my horse furniture, with which I hunt the wild cattle. If I throw it over his neck while he sleeps, one jerk of the cord strangles him, and—all is then, indeed, over with him! But, my lord, with regard to me, twice an apostate! first to my father’s faith,—but that was my own election; now to my once commander, and that is yours! I trust to your bounty, to pay me for my soul!”

And the wretch dared to laugh; but it was with a horror in its sounds, that shook Berenice where she lay, as if the enemy of mankind were himself then at the ear of her father. Of her father! and was it her father, her adored father, whom her almost idolatrous love had, even in the moment before she last slept, proclaimed omnipotent over her?—was he there?—Himself the tempter to the bloody deed, this ruffian was sporting with! Her senses seemed in

a whirl of madness, yet she felt that all was indeed dreadful reality. She had heard it all, and was yet alive! Was it possible, that her ear should not have closed in sudden deafness? And had it still power to convey to her freezing heart the issue of the conference?

Her father answered the Courd, while, in the collected haughtiness of his tones, he distanced the presumptuous familiarity of a conscious emissary in crime. "It is well, Orodes," said he, "that you understand your duty, even at the last. Come with me to the horses, and I will see whether one of my sumpter mules does not carry some weapon equally safe for you in using, and more worthy giving death to a brave knight than a halter. He must die; but I would not willingly have it the death of a dog."

With these words, the cavalier and his slave left the cell.

Berenice listened, without drawing breath, to their departing steps, till she heard them no more; when, suddenly braced in body and soul, as by some supernatural power, and almost thinking she heard a voice whispering her, "He shall not die! Not die by your father!" she immediately rose from her bed, and calling in her heart on the God who seemed to fill it with the prompting thought, to indeed arm her with strength, and guide her to her purpose, she wrapped herself in the gray travelling mantle that lay near her, even to her head, and glided gently from out her vaulted chamber into the court before it. The air was awfully still and oppressive; and all was profound darkness, save, at a moving point, far in the distance, where she discerned a glimmering light; probably, she deemed, and she deemed truly, the solitary lamp of the evil pair proceeding to the horses. She knew her track was to keep close to the line of her own cell; feeling her way with her hands, along the front of the one her father had just left—then, by the fallen arch—and in the next she was certain to find that of the purposed victim.

Swiftly did she pass to her object, distinguishing by a touch every intervening place. But when arrived in front of De Beaufort's cell, she paused. Not from any maiden apprehension, of treading for the first time the sleeping chamber of a man and a stranger: not from any shrinking of her soul from aught that night's after events might prove, in consequence of what she now dared:—but again to invoke the All-merciful blessing on her deed. Her eye glanced round.

She could no longer see the receding lamp. Her hand felt for the step that led into the chamber. She discovered, and passed it in the same moment; and, in the next, found herself by the side of the sleeper's couch. Found, by still feeling with her hands—for all within, as without, was darkness.

“Beaufort!” she cried, “awake, for your life!” He started up at the sound, demanding who spoke. “An unhappy creature;” cried she, “but sent by Heaven, to call you to rise, and arm yourself. This very moment quit this cell—the foulest murder is preparing, to destroy you in it.”

“By these treacherous Arabs?” and he sprang from his couch, half armed in his leathern hauberk, as he had lain down.

“Not them, not them,” returned she. “But swear, you will not seek by whom! Swear, you will summon your men, and quit this place! This instant quit it!—or, you may live, but you will know, that your deliverer dies. Swear!” Her voice was that of one in mortal, mental agony. “My men are at a call, by a single blast of the bugle now at my neck,” he replied; “and, whoever thou art, that thus seeks, at some desperate risk, to preserve my life from some near enemy I do not know! Rest confident, that my deliverer's voice, being woman's, I shall obey and strictly. Hear, Heaven! I swear it!”

At that moment, a peal of thunder burst over the caravan-sary; and a flash of lightning filling the cell, showed them to each other in apparitions never to be forgotten. Berenice was standing in the instantaneous blaze, with one arm clasping her falling dark mantle round her; the other raised to heaven, as if invoking its seal upon the oath she had just heard; and her eyes looking upwards also towards the awfully responding sounds, seemed all that was left of mortal life, in that deathful beautiful face. So pale it was, it seemed that of some sheeted corpse, inspired awhile with vital voice and movement to warn him from a treacherous grave; but the sublime loveliness of that phantom being, stampit itself upon his soul, with living memories.

Berenice's eye dropt towards him, just as the flashing flame was vanishing. But in that glance, she saw she had saved a man of gentle aspect; and though yet habited in his hauberk, the breast straps were unbraced by which the assassin's steel would have had free entrance; and she saw

the noble neck bare, he had threatened with his cord. Of the face of De Beaufort, she could not have told a feature ; but it shone like the light of goodness. So, at least, after-remembrances of that hour represented it. But in the moment, she was not conscious to observing any thing, but that she then beheld a human being devoted to murder, whom she had preserved ; and whose murderer would have been her father !

With the vanishing flash, she too was gone. And the thunder rolled, and the rain began to pour in torrents, just as she re-entered within the canvass curtain of her cell. In the self-same minute, she heard the shrill bugle of De Beaufort, and the answering gathering shout of his men.

"I thank thee. Heaven!" But with the words yet on her tongue, the strength of her frame failed ; she threw from her the mantle which had concealed her thin night-clothes ; and sinking down on her bed, drew the coverlid over her. The world seemed whirling in her brain and heart, for a moment ; and then, all of that world, with the consciousness of pain or wo, were stilled within her.

Berenice lay insensible.

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"Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,  
It could not move thus."

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When Berenice revived to recollection, all was in profound quiet around her. But a vague impression of misery, immediately vibrating in her heart, she lay a few minutes without opening her eyes, striving to remember what could have made her feel thus wretched. Those few minutes too truly bringing the flood of horrible memories back upon her, she started aghast from the apparition, and dashing aside the curtain of her couch, in quest of she knew not what, beheld, not only Rhodie in watching attendance, but three other women, all seated on silken cushions on the carpets of the floor ; while the room itself, no longer the close, dismal cell of the caravansary, presented a spacious and superb chamber, such as she had never seen before.

But where was she? How came she there? Was she indeed awake? Or, were her senses bewildered?—Her soul grasped at the thought, that she was yet in sleep; and every horrid, pressing image, the floating of a dream. Her trembling lips, however, called on Rhodie with the question, "Where am I?"

She scarcely had uttered the inquiry, ere the faithful Courd, joyful at this proof of recovering health, hastened forward, and told her, she was lodged for a while where her father's commands were law. At the word, the three women bowed their heads to the floor, and quitted the room on a sign from Rhodie. She then, more particularly, answered the anxiously questioning Berenice; informing her, she had been long ill, very ill, of a phrenzy fever; which seized her the night of their sojourn at the caravansary; that about an hour past midnight, during the height of the storm, she had awakened from an apparently tranquil sleep, in a state of raving agonies, which roused and terrified Rhodie; who hurried to her side, and could hardly hold her down on her bed, while she continued incessantly calling on her father; but with so many appalling proofs of delirium in what she said, that when he did rush in from the raging elements without, to learn the cause of these cries from her chamber, the disorder of her intellects became so frightful, that on hearing her ravings, he became nearly as distracted himself, or stood, spell-bound, gazing on her.

"Saint Gregory guard us!" continued Rhodie, turning pale at the recollection; "for of a surety, the caravansary was struck that night by some evil planet. The strange chief, with all his band, went out in the teeth of the whirlwind, leaving no word to the Sheik for so wild a fleeing from shelter. Orodes gashed himself across the face with his knife, swearing that demons were let loose, but his master should see he feared neither men nor devils; and would have run out also into the plain amidst the thunder and lightning, had not my lord your father caught him in the desperate act, and commanded him, on peril of his life, to keep guard over our *menzil*, and let none approach to disturb my watchful care over his daughter; and there I staid till about dawn, the weather abating, my lord, then composed and of hope for your recovery, came and took us thence; brought you hither, to be cured by the great Arab sage desert."

While these circumstances were relating, every uttered word united so convincingly to Berenice, with the horrible facts of her memory, that all hope of its delusion died in her breast; and she listened, with a shuddering, freezing heart, feeling that henceforth any sense of happiness there, was quenched for ever. What was her father now in her eyes? a meditated murderer; and she felt she could not ask—“Where is he?”

But Rhodie gave the information unrequested. He was gone, far into the wilderness, to bring a certain water from a spring there, which the sage had assured him would revive his daughter to all she had been before her illness.

“The water that is to revive me to what I was before my illness, must indeed be presented by his hand, Rhodie!” returned Berenice, breaking into a passion of tears; “but that spring is not of earth; and my father must drink it with me!”

Rhodie did not understand her. Nor did Berenice, hardly re-settled in mind, mark whether she did or not. The broken-hearted daughter, could only weep over the sacred name of father her lips had again pronounced, with the roused throb of an agonized tenderness, on hearing of his journey into the trackless waste, in search of means for her amendment.

From that hour she rapidly recovered. Prayer for her father’s penitence; and praise that his intended victim had really escaped, and, by performing his oath of silence in his departure, had prevented further discovery of the meditated perpetration;—both subjects for her gratitude, concurred to sooth her into hope and peace. But it was the hope of a mind no longer concerning itself with this world; it was faith in his contrition, and humble hopes of heaven, that inspired hers. And, while her soul, during her matin and vesper orisons, reverted to the holy tranquillity of Olivet, she often felt within her—“O! that I could now stretch my wearied wings towards thee, and be at rest!”

But the sabbath of Berenice was not so soon to come. Her time of struggle with the world, she had so yearned to wander in, was not yet completed; and the spear was to enter still deeper into the heart, which had leaned on with the worship of a God!—Yet, what mercy meted that sentence! The chastened spirit is the happiest; f it is taught to know the object of its trust; and, w

there confides its peace, the seal of immortality becomes stamped upon it.

In the course of a few days after Berenice's first revival to herself, she gradually resumed her former appearance ; so far as that her cheek bloomed, and her step became light ; but she seldom smiled, and her sighs were frequent. The sumptuous mansion she was in, furnished with every luxury of Asiatic wealth, never once drew a remark from her. And the crowding attendants, who obeyed the behests of the sage, the owner of the house, in sprinkling her bath every morning with roses from the borders of Syria, when they hovered near her, were alike unobserved, till seeing them kneeling in slavish prostration, with their different offerings of service, she waved her hand for them to rise, and leave her to the affectionate duties of Rhodie alone.

But the hours were many she reserved to perfect solitude. And then she sat retired within shadow of the half trellis that ornamented, as well as sheltered, the corridor or balcony which opened eastward from her chamber window ; and thence commanded a view, not only over the vistaed garden of the mansion which stood on the edge of the desert, but that boundless tract itself. Here she contemplated the stern grandeur of nature ; the awful expanse of sterile plain, reflecting with ocean-like brightness the radiant concave above, clasping it in, like time meeting eternity.

Such had been her meditations one morning, while lingering, as usual, in her favorite seat some time after the sun had risen, and the heat was becoming almost insufferable from the intensity of his level rays ; when, just as she turned to quit the place, her attention was caught by a sudden and extraordinary appearance on the southern horizon of the desert. A vast yellow cloud, coming forwards actually along the surface of the earth, and gradually increasing in body and denseness as it seemed swiftly advancing towards the point where she stood. For she did stand ; gazing, astonished, at the phenomenon. But presently the echoes of a rolling thunder, sounded from within that cloud ; and soon told her now practised ear, that it covered a train of horsemen. The next moment, a gust of wind blowing aside the sandy dust from before them, discovered, not horsemen merely, but horsemen in wide flanking array, in all the military pomp of Asiatic warfare or parade ; enclosing between their ranks a numerous body of laden camels,



some mounted by men, others appeared carrying women ; while, in front, proceeded three elephants, gorgeously caparisoned, and each bearing a canopy on its back.

That Berenice beheld all this, though at first only by little more than a minute's wondering view, arose from the abrupt entrance of Rhodie behind her. just as she was retreating back into the covert of her trellis ; but the Courd, enraptured with what she saw, or rather having learnt her lesson what to do, with apparent unintention, yet respectfully, detained her lady in front of the open balcony, till the young and guileless heart again awakening to observation, her eyes became rivetted to so extraordinary a spectacle. The singular beauty and splendour of the centre elephant, particularly engaged her admiration. It was spotless white, with triappings of cloth of gold ; and chains of the same precious metal, hanging over its breast, and fastening the canopy on its back, whence the rich embroidered curtains, fringed with gold, pended over the huge sides of the animal like the devolving drapery of a tent. Above, floated an azure banner, studded with mimic stars, and held by some invisible hand from behind the canopy. The elephants were all guided by men on foot, in sumptuous raiment, answering to that of the animals they attended. All this now described, Berenice could distinguish with ease, being in front of the array. But beyond, there appeared an indiscriminate crowd of camels, horsemen, glittering pennons, and the pointed tops of the peculiar sort of travelling carriage borne by the camel. The sun's slant beams, shining at the same time through the yet not quite dispersed cloud of sand in the rear of the pageant, by surrounding it with a kind of misty halo, gave it altogether so visionary an appearance, that had Berenice been in her former happy state, when the mind can play with its objects, she would have smilingly inquired of Rhodie, " Whether the scene before them, were not some illusion, some *Peri mirage* of the desert ? "

But, as it was, she only expressed her astonishment at any thing so splendidly magnificent, forming a travelling train, and therefore being exposed to all the casualties of so desolate a track. She did not even say to Rhodie, " Whence come they ? " for she saw by the sparkling crescents on the ensign tops, they must own some Mahometan lord. But it seemed there were those in the band who knew what eyes looked on them, even though covered by a veil ; for, by a

simultaneous movement, on signal by a clash of cymbals, each elephant and camel knelt down, as before her, and every standard bowed, and every dismounted horseman bent his turbaned head in the dust.—

“To you, to you, my lady!” exclaimed Rhodie. But Berenice, shocked at such notice from a host of infidels, and believing they must have mistaken her for some other female inhabitant of that house, who, by Moslem birth, might have some right to such homage, hurried away from further view of the scene. She had hardly reseated herself within her apartment, and recovered from the redoubled disorder into which the exclamation of Rhodie had thrown her, ere she heard steps approaching through the outer chamber, and which her filial heart instantly recognised, but with a surprise of horror that shook her to the soul, to be her father’s. She sunk back into her seat, pale and trembling. The next moment he entered speaking, inquiring for his daughter; in spite of herself, she shrieked at sound of that voice, and put her hand upon her eyes; then, instantly aware of what she had done, she threw herself forward to the floor, on her knees, and with her head bent to the ground.

The cavalier did indeed read all that was passing in her mind and heart, in these actions. But he knew his course; and calmly drawing near, raised her. She shuddered, as if in the grasp of the grave, while he clasped her to his breast. She felt as if blood met her there! then, if his whom she had saved, had been actually shed; “What,” thought she, “could in this moment have preserved me from dying, where I ought to honour—but living, I must abhor?”—She gasped as one expiring, and her head dropped; but where? not on her father’s bosom, as it was wont; but on her own—cold, lonely!

“Berenice,” said he, “you have been fearfully ill;—are yet so, I dread, since you do not seem to know your father!”

“Yes! yes! I do know,”—was all her convulsed heart could answer.

He gently reseated her, and placed himself beside her. The seat stood near the gilded trellis of one of the windows, and she leaned her throbbing brow against it.

“My daughter,” he resumed, “your fever was full of many spectres; and, in your delirium, you described your

father as one of them!—and your present manner, so different from that with which, till now, you ever hastened to my arms, and gazed upon my face, and vowed, in filial duty, to live for me alone!—cannot but lead me to suppose that you do believe me guilty of all your frenzied tongue then charged me with;—black dishonour, assassination, and tempting men to their perdition!—Berenice, look on me, and answer me!”

While he spake, with the solemnity of an innocent man, and also the affectionate solicitude of a parent, Berenice felt almost frantically bewildered. Had she really been in maddened fever from the first closing of her eyes, in that dreadful caravansary? Had all been a frightful conjuration of the brain? excepting, indeed, her report of that false vision to the chief; who, in consequence, had fled! Of that Rhodie had testified; though little aware of by whose suggestion he had done so incomprehensible an act!

Again she pressed her burning forehead, while obeying her father in turning towards him. Inwardly she called on Heaven to restore her faculties! Then, withdrawing her hand, she looked upon his face.

“Was it indeed all a dream?” she said; and a real wildness was in her eyes when she put the question. The cavalier tenderly folded her hand in his.—“What was a dream, my child?”

“Oh, that fearful night!” returned she. “Yes, O! yes! It must have been a dream, blessed Heaven!—It must have been a dream; for you left me, my father, on my bed for sleep; and I did sleep; and then I waked—I know not how—and I heard such things—such horrible things!—But it was a dream—and it made me mad, very mad!—But it was a dream!—Say—say it was, my father!—and I am happy—well, again!”—And, with the adjuration, she was on her knees before him, clasping his hands, and wringing them; for the recollection of what she then heard, had renewed all its horrors within her.

“It must have been a dream,” answered he, “or the beginning of your fever, my Berenice, that shaped those dreadful images to your fancy; and, since, have almost killed your father, in anguish for your sufferings.”

At a reply so fraught with life to her, her lips clung, speechless to his hand.—He took her from the floor, and placing her again close to him, tenderly soothed her agi-

tated nerves, by his fond expressions of the fullest parental confidence.

"But you must repay me for it all!" gently whispered he, while he kissed her cheek. Her head was then leaning, in blissful tears, upon his bosom;—"You must restore your father to his birthright.—It is in your power, my child," added he, in a louder and firmer tone, "to crush every viper, which, I told you, has been tearing this breast for eighteen years!"

"In my power, my father?"—and she looked up, devotedly regarding his face.

"Yes," continued he, "it is in your power to be to me as that son, for whom your mother had besought Heaven in vain, when you were born! that son, whose birth would have secured to me the rights of my name, and what is dearer to me, of my renown!—But which, the baseness and the ambition of them who owed me duty, have since wrested from me.—Hear me, Berenice! and let thy father's spirit enter into thee, whilst thou hearest me!"

He rose from his seat, and stood before her; and now she beheld him distinctly; doubt and emotion having, till then, almost blinded her sight.—His whole figure seemed dilated by the lofty spirit that did indeed at that moment stir within himself. He was clad in the complete steel of a crusade knight; a full suit of chain armour, with the red cross glowing on its breast. But the plumes of his unvisored helmet rather shadowed the noble contour of his face; and the ample folds of his mantle in part concealed the points of the cross. But Berenice's eye fastened on it.—"No assassin's heart could beat under that sacred symbol!" cried she, within herself.—"Wretch! parricide of my father's fame!—to what has a frenzied dream led me!—Oh, blessed was my ignorance of his name; else that too might have been promulged in my madness, and the stigma affixed for ever!"

All this rushed at once through her thoughts; and in a paroxysm of mingled remorse, and devoted reverence, she exclaimed:—"Yes; my father, I will hear thee, with my soul!—And by that holy sign upon thy bosom, I repeat the vow—that, whatever my mother would have prayed, a son or daughter might be to thee;—such will I prove, if Heaven grants me power!"—

At the last sentence, he reared himself like the proud

steed of the desert feeling the rein still in its mouth, and frowned, with a nostril as eloquently disdainful of the hand that curbed him.—But Berenice's head was bowed down, in her deep humility; and she did not see the momentary change in his aspect.—He advanced again nearer to her, but continued standing while he spake.—

“Be it so, my daughter!” cried he, “and know me to be one, born to compel the power of men—Eustace de Bouillon! brother of two sovereigns of Jerusalem of that name! and, but for the treason of Baldwin de Bourg, your father would now be the third!”

Berenice was indeed roused from her bended position.—She started—she rose, at the annunciation of that name, as his! which even afore, she had heard pronounced with more than a simple interest in its heroic fame; with an idea of its belonging to the prince, who probably had commanded her own brave father.—And was that heroic Eustace now before her—and in his person did she see her father?

She gazed on him with amazement, but not in doubt. Here stood the splendid wreck of all the marvellous beauty, she had been told was the portion of Eustace; bearing its own evidence to his daughter, that this was he!—Here too, she had witnessed, was that impetuous, that magnificent spirit, she had heard described as the dazzling characteristics of that intrepid prince;—and, when she recalled to recollection the sorrows of her mother,—here, then, was “the leopard, with his spots!”—and this was her father!—The illustrious, by birth; the hero, in renown!—The injured, by his own kindred; the betrayed, by the chieftains, whom he had led to victory and dominion!

Berenice felt all this, imaged on her at once; and the noble form before her, so outraged, so shorn of its inheritance, appeared to her sufficiently glorious in its renown alone;—but, oh! how dearer in this appeal to a daughter's consolations, than if he stood before her Prince of Edessa, or King of Jerusalem!—Her very soul was at his feet; and throwing herself, tremblingly, yet fervently before them, she exclaimed:—“Name but how your child can devote herself to the service of such a father?—and I am his.”—She was in his arms, and on his heart, when the last word dropped from her tongue.

“At night,” he said, “when the moon rises—that was the hour of my birth, Berenice!—I will tell thee how thou

canst give new life to thy parent!—Meanwhile, this evening, you must receive, as my daughter, the messenger of a great sovereign, thy father's friend, who comes to guard us in our journey eastward. Let Rhodie dress you for the interview? For though my Berenice is ever lovely in her father's eyes, splendour is a duty in the daughter of Eustace de Bouillon. This nobleman alone, of any here, yet knows who I am; but a little time, and all Syria shall hear it."

Having said this, he soon after withdrew; and Berenice retired to the little recess she had constituted her oratory, where her every joy was acknowledged, where her every sorrow had received a balm.

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"Away with slavish weeds, or churlish thoughts!  
Thou shalt be bright, and shine in pearl and gold;  
And so, emblazon proud, thy mistress' name!"

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When the time approached for the ceremony her father had intimated, Rhodie again appeared; and conducting Berenice to her attiring-room, adorned her according to the directions she had previously received, in all the splendour of an Eastern princess. Having performed her task, she went aside, to replace some of the superabundant materials; and, by mistake, opening the private casket of her lady, in which she kept her little treasury of remembrances of Olivet, the quick-eyed waiting woman caught a glimpse of a very strange relic to be found with a daughter of that mount; and snatching it up, suddenly exclaimed,—“What! a talisman of Mecca?”

Berenice, glancing round, saw it to be the offering the Hadjé had pressed into her hand at the porch of the convent; and which, on looking at afterward, had appeared to her some rude sort of ornament seemingly moulded of scented gray wax, and stamped with a few no longer legible Arabic characters, mixed with a sort of image,—a small silver ring pended from it.—She asked Rhodie what she meant by a talisman of Mecca?

“A charmed cake,” answered she, “kneaded, when the moon is in horn, of the dust from the false prophet's mosque there. The spouse of a *nomade* Sheik once showed

me one ; and she swore by the stars, when her lord went out against his enemies, it made him brave as a sword ; and, when she wanted to be pleasing in his sight, she had only to put the talisman into her bosom, and presently she became beautiful as a *hourî*.—I, being a Christian Court, thought I must not believe that daughter of Mahomet ; but the like *charm* is with you, most pure and beautiful lady ! and—but how dare I presume to speak my heart to my lady ? when I know it also preserves travellers from every evil thing !”

She ceased, with a vivid flush mantling over her smooth, dark cheek ; but her eyes were still fixed on the talisman. —Rhodie was yet in the prime of her days, and handsome for one of her tribe : but she knew that her husband had ceased to think her so ; and the present temptation to restore the past, overbore her better faith. Berenice discerned the poor heart-betrayed wife’s unholy meaning ; and pitying the weakness she could not but reprove, answered her, however, without showing her that she quite understood her.

“ If that cake be a *charm*,” she gently replied, “ by your own account, it must be a baneful thing itself ; having had an evil origin. It was, however, given to me, along with a blessing, from a grateful old man ; a blessing, not addressed to that false prophet, but to the Father of all mankind ; and such blessing is sacred from whatever lips it come. But for this dumb idol of error, I was ignorant of its import !—Give it to me, Rhodie ? it must no longer pollute our eyes.—There,” added she, dropping it from her window into a deep tank below, “ the waters will soon dissolve the poor tainted piece of clay to its dust again ; while the blessing, like the spirit of man, mounts up to the power that breathed it.”

Rhodie stood, blushing with conscious shame ; and before other word could pass between the gentle mistress, and her ardent, but only half-taught Christian attendant ; it being then the hour of sunset, her father’s voice summoned her into the adjoining room, to accompany him to the audience chamber of his apartments. She met him, indeed, one blaze of jewelled radiance ; and, exultingly, he thought she rather graced them, than they her ; then, with a nod of approbation to her faithful handmaid, he took his daughter’s ready hand, to lead her to the first scene of her

communion with the world; the actual world, that tries the soul and reins! But I will not anticipate my subject.

In passing one of the numerous mirrors, which mingled their bright reflections with the various other ornaments on the arabesque walls of the rooms, she caught a view of her person; and certainly would not have recognised it to be herself, had not her eye glanced from the splendid apparition, to the noble and revered form on which it leaned. Her jewelled vesture shone through the transparent veil that covered her, like light behind a mist, appearing more brilliant by the dispersion of its rays. But to her father's sight, fond as he was of pomp, the virgin bloom of her youthful face, breathing nature's purest rose and lily, lit by the loveliest eyes of tender innocence; these were to him, with his views, the most precious gems behind that lucid gauze. He saw the start she gave, on discerning her splendid image in the glass; and smiling, told her not to be astonished, for she only appeared now, what she ought familiarly to have known herself; for, he added, that in this mirror she might read the story of her mother's lineage.

"There," said he, "as thou seest thyself now, the hero Ptolemy first beheld the first Berenice of thy race; and such was her daughter, of thy name also, when she won a second monarch of Egypt, by her own heroic spirit; and whose bright locks, in ensign of that triumph, were consecrated by her royal husband,—till you see them now translated to the skies!"

Berenice gazed at her father, not at herself, during this address. "I am serious," continued he; "your mother was of the lineage I speak of, princely as my own. But centuries have rolled between it, and its power; and when I met her in the hospital of Saint John, one of the noble unprofessed sisters of mercy there, she was the last germ of that once magnificent tree, and proudly I transplanted it into my bosom. Thou art now, what she was then; the last princess of the blood of many sovereigns, from the Tigris to the Nile; and there is that whispering thy father, Berenice, which, tells him, thou art born to be the mother of many more.

The magnificence of all she now saw under her father's command, and heard of as connected with him, made nothing in what he at present, said, appear incredible, however incomprehensible it yet was to her; and whether his home



would finally be beyond the Euphrates ; whither she understood they were proceeding, in charge of every cavalcade she had seen ;—or on the other side of the river of Egypt, she knew not ; only she felt, that she did comprehend so much, as that her father possessed royal claims somewhere ; and, whenever gained, she was to share them with him. But to be with him always, was her sufficient kingdom. Therefore looking on him with all the legitimate homage of the filial heart, she again obeyed the impulse of his conducting arm.

The apartment into which he led her, was an immense saloon, entirely open towards the garden, where it fronted the coolest point of the heavens in that climate ; and where shade, and fountains, and every refreshment from vernal nature were visible. The chamber itself seemed that of a palace ; being wrought with gorgeous traceries, shrine-like screens, and gilded columns ; with every other accompaniment of satrap luxury. Towards the higher end were two low chairs cushioned with cloth of gold, and elevated on a slightly raised platform, covered with a similar carpet. In one of these the Prince de Bouillon seated his daughter, and then told her, she should soon see, as if in image, something of the countries which had once been her ancestors', and might be hers again ; a small train of persons of her own sex, from some of these would immediately enter, each bringing to her a little offering of duty—which must be rewarded, by her making a sign to Rhodie, who would then stand at her side, to present each with a purse of gold, of which an open coffer near her was filled to the brim. When they had performed their tasks, the messenger of his friend would next approach : “ And,” remarked her father, “ I shall trust to your own graciousness, to receive his gallant tribute as becomes the daughter of a prince of chivalry.”

Berenice listened to all this with the ingenuous delight of youthful expectation ; a sort of temporary intoxication, from so many objects of strange romantic vision, which had, and were to be, presented to her sight ; and there was even an echo in her young, glowing heart, to the latter adjuration.—Her slight veil being quite off her face when alone with her father, her eye, in her reply, reflected for once, the whole flashing grandeur of his own. He thought he now saw the loftiness of ambition there, as well as the consciousness of inborn nobleness,—and his soul was on fire to declare all within it.

“Berenice!” cried he, laying his hand on her shoulder, and rapturously regarding her radiant countenance, dimming indeed the ornaments about her; but he felt, he dared not yet trust the fullness of his triumph to his lips—and he turned hastily, as if to the sound of the approaching steps.

The next instant Rhodie appeared at one of the portals, and dressed as Berenice had never seen her; the costliness of the materials being equal to that of any of the superb train who immediately followed her. From the Euphrates west, to the Indus east—from the Caspian north, to the Great Sea south—from almost every country between those famed divisions of Asia, one beautiful native presented herself, habited in the fashion of her people, and bearing, on golden salvers, choice perfumes, or rich silks or stuffs, or precious stones; all according to the countries whence the presenters seemed to come; who laid them, successively, at the feet of Berenice; and then passed on, bowing, and veiling their eyes with their hands, as if from the dazzling of her beauty.

Berenice was not less astonished at the varied beauty in these fair Asiatics themselves, than by the evident value of the offerings they had brought; and she had opportunity to observe the ladies, for they did not withdraw,—but on each receiving her little present from Rhodie, made a profound obeisance, and arranged herself with the others, in a kind of semicircle, on the opposite quarter of the room. They had scarcely thus placed themselves, when the curtain of the great portal in the chamber opened, and two black attendants appeared, one bearing a large golden vase, breathing a fragrance which immediately filled the whole room; and the other a waving banner, which by its vernal hue and motion, added a feeling of freshness to the air it constantly agitated. Between them walked an august-looking personage, majestically and martially arrayed, with cuirass and *kaf-tan*, and shawls, and glittering dagger hilt; and a *chelenk* in his turban, of the finest jewels. But even that august head, bent to the ground, on approaching Berenice. Her father was then seated in the chair next her; and the veil of *Cos*, he had again cast over her, hung over her face and figure, like a tent of woven mist, through which she shone as a half-hidden star.

Three times the Emir bowed, while advancing to her—and each time her head instinctively did the same. Eustace

inclined his head also—but he did not rise to receive him. When the Emir reached the step of the platform on which she and her father sat, he took a roll of vellum from the bosom of his vest, also a small casket, and raising first the one, and then the other, above his head, and then touching them reverentially with his lips, he opened both. The vellum he presented to the prince, who then stood up to receive it—the contents of the casket was a broad bracelet of emeralds, linked with diamonds of the purest water known in the east. That bracelet had been the subject of many a tale, and many a minstrel song. He held it towards Berenice, bent down before her on his knee, and with the long, dark fringes of his eyelashes dropped reverentially both to her and the royal pledge he held. She then saw his face; and it was that of a man in the meridian of his life, handsome, warlike, and noble; but with the beard of the Moslem, as well as the turban. How strange, she thought, was this scene!—and again she remembered that in the dell of the mount,—and the Hadjé's talisman—and she was glad she had cast it from her. But her father was now with her—and why should she shrink from any people where he was?

Eustace smiled on the Emir, and on his daughter; and taking the bracelet from the former, first touched the vellum scroll with it, which he immediately put to his lips; and then, himself, clasped the gorgeous ornament on his daughter's arm.

“It is that which was worn by the bride of Haroun Al-raschid!” exclaimed the Emir:—at the moment, every female head in the chamber bowed itself to the very floor; and the august messenger himself did the same, while he yet more impressively added:—“Great Prince! in this thy daughter, a lovelier than Zobeide, adorns the bond of happiness. May my lady live for ever!”

At this word, two Ethiop boys, bearing small silver trumpets, and standing rather behind the curtains of the portal, blew a sort of glad clarion to the train without; and the answering clash of cymbals, with the roll of the drum, and the shout of many people, and a peculiarly appalling sound, like a burst of thunder broken by a whirlwind, the roar of the elephants, rose at once from beyond the garden.

But by a glance on her father's face, Berenice read there was nothing really to alarm in all this: rather the reverse; and therefore such acclamations, with their uproarious ac-

companiments, she supposed must be meant in compliment to him, and connected with his receiving the scroll from his great ally ; probably, she thought, the treaty between them : for she did not understand the language in which the Emir had adressed him.

During the noise, which was repeated thrice, and while every head was again bowed down before him veiling their eyes, he gave his hand to his daughter, and led her from the chamber. What was then in her heart ?—Alas, Berenice ! more of the daughter of a prince, than of the novice of Olivet !

He conducted her to his private apartment ; and seated her near an open veranda, which looked far over the desert ; then blending its golden tints from the sunken sun, into the silvery hues of the prevailing moonlight. The air was very tranquil ; and the lofty beatings of Berenice's bosom, began to subside amid the serenity of sublime nature. Her father, meanwhile, walked the room in silence ; his pulses were perturbed, but his countenance did not betray it ; yet he once or twice turned his eyes upon her ; and, when she met them, at the moment he was approaching her to speak, she then saw they were full of anxious matter.

“ Berenice,” said he, “ not an ear is near us now !—and thy destiny, the destiny of thy father, shall be wholly revealed. While I speak, my daughter, let your heart answer all its own questions !—You know who I am ; who your mother was. Both sprung from a race of monarchs ; both deprived of their birthright !—She, now in her grave ; I, a wanderer from land to land, seeking some just hand to help me to my own. Edessa should have been mine, when Baldwin, my brother, transferred it to Baldwin de Bourg, a mere knight ; but whose wiles were surer than his sword !—Jerusalem should have been mine, when Baldwin, my brother, bequeathed it to this same De Bourg !—What, then ?—Did gratitude, in any way, bind him to respect the race that made him ?—No !—He told me to my teeth, that this or that, were all preferred before me ; a train of successors were planned, and my name as none of them ;—that the very least of them all, was worth the best, now left of the De Bouillon !

“ He told me this, and lived, Berenice !—but thanks to

his prepared cowardice, and a band of concealed mercenaries, wretches from the mountains, who sprang upon me, and wrenched the sword from my hand, that would soon have made a bloody gap in that recreant roll!

“Whither, then, did I flee?—Not to Antioch; not to Edessa!—all, all were filled with my enemies; for all dreaded the name of Eustace!—and well was I aware, that the fate which had held me ten years imprisoned in England, when the jealousy of its usurping king shut up his brave brother and myself there, would have plunged me into deeper dungeons here in Palestine.—Think, my Berenice, think of thy father, menaced, ambushed like a ruffian!—Think of the victorious arm, which had planted the first standard of the crusaders on the walls of Edessa,—on the towers of Jerusalem,—think of that arm, pinioned like a slave’s in the very city I had won; and by the hands of the basest hirelings of the robber of my rights! Think of thy father—the brother of Godfrey de Bouillon, banished, like a reprobate, from the Holy Land!—and by whom?—Baldwin de Bourg, his bowing henchman!—Where fled I then?—even to yon desert! My single arm alone, against the beasts of prey, and the bold challenge of the avowed despoiler!—But I fared kinder there, than with my kindred, my people, and a crouching hypocrite!

“Berenice, would you not do much for them who there sheltered thy father?—who served, cherished, and honoured him?—yea, who treated him like a brother, till he almost forgot the mortal wound within his breast!—and these were, what you may yet possibly deem strangers to us, Berenice!”

“Strangers?—my father!” cried she; “they are to me as brothers, as sisters indeed!—And what would I do, you ask me, to show them my gratitude?—Ah, rather say, what would I not do?—to prove a gratitude, boundless as my duty—as your daughter’s love, my father!” The latter words were uttered with all the devoted, the reverential piety, that then filled her soul.

“Berenice,” continued he, “at the head of these people—but I do not mean the wild Asiatic people of this desert—there are noble countries, beyond the deserts yet farther distant; and at the head of one of those, is the sovereign, whose slaves sent to attend you, you have seen in those women who laid his offerings at your feet; whose captain of his own guards, sent to do me honour, you have beheld

in that Emir. This house also, is his; prepared, ere I set forth from my palace in his kingdom, to be my daughter's lodging in my return; and the sage that holds it in charge, is his servant; and every living creature you have looked upon, within and without its walls, since you entered them, are his;—and all collected together on this spot to serve my child! yet, that is but a drop in the tide of his full faith!

“Edessa is now beleaguered by his forces.—That treacherous city, once mine! the war-steed of Eustace de Bouillon, will on as it wont!—and Berenice shall see her father crowned at Jerusalem!—Yes, my daughter, I go with thee, to the destiny of thine own mounting spirit—for I saw it, like an eagle pluming for the sun,—the moment I beheld thine eye measure the rocks of Jericho!”

He paused.—Berenice had risen from her seat. All that was within her of daughter, ay, and of son also, was then roused in her heart and soul; all, too, that was within her, of that strange romantic chivalry, born in her bosom like an instinct, was on fire.—It was not blood and horrors she thought on, in the beleaguered field; it was not wounds and death she saw, when she triumphed in her father's victory; nor did she then see aught in his becoming sovereign of Jerusalem, than his succession by lawful right, and the just resignation of the present king. The glory, then, was alone present with her; and her mind's eye beheld her father, seated on his throne, brighter to her in his fame, than from any splendour of his royal magnificence!

She had not power to speak, the depth of her sympathy with her father's wrongs; the mightiness of her thoughts, in his triumph over his enemies; but clasping his hand frequently between hers, and raising her eyes, full of filial enthusiasm, to heaven,—she pressed it closely to her heart; and the beatings there, told that the silence of her lips did not reign there.—Then, turning those devoted eyes on him, her bosom heaved yet more strugglingly, till at last she articulated—“My father, the daughter's spirit is thine.—I feel it—nor even in dangers, nor in death, would I wish another destiny than thine.”

“My own! my own!” cried he, snatching her to his bosom: “Berenice!—kings lean from their clouds to hear and own thee! But it is not to dangers and death I lead my treasured child;—'tis to the pavilion of my victory;—to a home of seated greatness; and, what is dearer to thee,

of munificence, boundless as thy heart.—But, who gives it to my daughter?—Not her father—” again he paused.

“ Ah! Heaven, indeed, gives it: and every other blessing, to my father, and to me!” ardently replied Berenice; “ and my life, were it to eternity, could never speak my gratitude!”

“ Heaven, in its agent, gives it to thee, my Berenice!” answered he: “ The great sovereign to whose side I conduct you, bestows it all;—the happy husband to whose arms I lead you to repay him all!”

When the latter part of this reply was uttered, Berenice hardly knew what it all said; for, when she heard that it was to a husband she was going, her heart became mute, and her ears’ further sense was lost to her.—To a husband! a strange, unknown husband’s home, her father was taking her—not to his own!—and the sudden shock of dire disappointment wrung her to the inmost soul. She felt, indeed, that the desert was now before her, for—he was to leave her at the end!—and how?

“ Oh, my only parent!” cried she, at last forcing utterance: “ It is your destiny that is to be mine!—It is for you I live!—give me to another, and I die.” She hung, trembling, on his bosom, while she feebly spoke. Eustace felt the chaste, the pleading pulse of his daughter’s heart. All the timid woman, all the clinging fondness of the child were there; but no longer one lofty throb of the imagination; no longer one single beat, of that latent “ pride of life,” born with all who come into the world!

He looked down on that lovely virgin face, youthful, innocent in all its smiles of happiness; and on the heart beneath it—devoted to him, as part of his very being—his better being! For there was yet a point, to which he must urge her, that, he foresaw, might place him on a throne; but this trusting daughter’s love and reverence, would be lost to him for ever!

“ Berenice!” said he, and the tone entered her heart and soul; for all that was tender and noble in his own, were then in his voice—“ Berenice, let me look on thee?—Look in my eyes, my child?—Dost thou not see there that thy father loves thee?—Yes, my daughter; and as he has never yet loved woman. Berenice, thy father could die for thee; but, in living, he must exist to a duty beyond himself;—his renown! Eustace de Bouillon must not perish, and leave his name in basement!”

While this was speaking, Berenice did indeed see all her father was then feeling, as printed on his expressive countenance ; and the writing made her his.

"My father," cried she, with the generous glow of entire self-dedication to his will, mantling from her bosom to her cheek ; "what am I, that I should set limits to my duty to thee ! My love has none. Do with me what you please. But—if I am to be another's—" she stopped, gaspingly, and with a paleness unto death,—and then added—"Oh, let me not be always separated from the parent, that is my all in this world ! This kindless world, into which I followed thee, my father, to live and die with thee, and lie down in the same grave at last !"

Her head lay on his bosom, when she said this ; and her tears were there also. He felt that he could not himself bear to crush the fond confiding faith, that new rested there,—even like a dove on a volcano's mouth ;—and he knew that the utterance of his full answer to what she had just said, whenever it was pronounced, would do it.—Therefore, he tenderly kissed her forehead, and with stifled emotion only replied :—

"This is enough for the present. The young votress of a convent life, may well be shaken by the new views I have opened to her—the destiny of happiest woman ; to leave her father's house, to love, and be beloved by other than her kindred ? But we shall travel now, and think no more of these things, till the banks of the Euphrates rise before us ; and then, my child, you shall be told the name of him, your father's benefactor, who awaits you beyond them. But not to take you from your father ; rather to unite himself with me the firmer ; even as a son with a father ! And you, my child, will have given him to me, as a son, who has my fate at his command ! Go then to thy rest, and sleep sweetly on that conviction ; for to-night must see us on our journey."

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When Berenice found herself returned into her own chamber, to retire for an hour or two's repose ; for they were indeed to start that night with the meridian moon, for their long travel across the desert ; she felt like a creature walking under the influence of some strong exciting, yet be-



numbing opiate. To become a wife, and so suddenly, and to a being she had never seen! again recurred to her, with shuddering. "Yet what of that?" cried she to herself, while throwing her throbbing head upon her pillow;—"he is my father's benefactor. And what must he be, in nobleness as well as power, to whom Eustace de Bouillon would give such a title!"

But to become the wedded partner of any man, had, indeed, never entered the thoughts of the young, and almost professed nun of Saint Mary's; and again and again shrinking from the idea, as of a sacrifice that only her father could have claimed; and, only for that father would it ever have been contemplated; in a sort of stunned resignation, she dropt suddenly to sleep.

The time was short she slept, but it was long enough to have shed a calm of comfort over her troubled spirit. She dreamt that her father led her over the desert to a green mountain; that the side of the mountain had a great cave in it, out of which a war-chariot, like those of antiquity, came forth; and a personage was in it, dressed in the manner of the *Emir*, but of a younger and more beautiful aspect; and she thought his face was like that of De Beaufort, as she saw it in the lightning. On seeing her, this personage stretched out his hand to her, and put a ring upon her finger; and with his other hand placed a crown on the head of her father who immediately looked no longer like his present self, the noble wreck alone of transcendent manly beauty, but such as he must have been when hailed the Arintheus of Edessa;—and, smiling, he took her hand, and said, "Now, I perform my promise—come with me!—You have the ring; but your spouse is in heaven. Come to my home and yours!"

"Angels have ministered to me in my sleep!" she softly murmured to herself, when she waked; "and by this sweet dream of presage, have made kind compensation, for the horrible visitation of a former night! I thank thee, Father in Heaven! if it is to be so! Short is to be our time, till we come to his lasting dearer home—the home where my mother waits us!"

Thus calmed, the calm of a sacredly assured spirit; it was even with a cheerful step, she obeyed the call of her father's voice, and gave him her hand, to lead her to the train. She was now enveloped in a veil impenetrable to

any eye ; but every knee bent before her, while she passed, and turbaned heads swept the dust ; yet the universal silence, and the monotony of action, made the whole appear more like a piece of nicely constructed machinery, and the actors mere automatons impelled by some master spring, than human beings showing reverence and regret. How different from the scene of her departure from Olivet ! But there was the living soul, and she was a simple maid, parting from those that loved her ! Here, indeed, was every display of honour to the daughter of a prince. The passages she trod, were laid with carpets ; and flaming censers, breathing aromatic fragrance, lit her steps to the great gate of the mansion. There, man's illumination was extinguished ; for the night shone in all the soft splendour of an Asiatic climate. There, too, were drawn up in array, the travelling cavalcade ; all glittering under the brilliant stars.

The moment Eustace and his daughter appeared at the gate, every standard bowed, and the cymbals proclaimed their approach. Berenice now felt the charm of these pompous novelties dissolved, by the knowledge they were likely to become too familiar to her ; but, while again observing the pointed spears, and crescent pennons, glancing in the moon-beams, she could not refrain from the sighing reflection,—“Ah, why does the magnanimous sovereign that is my father's friend, and who commands so many nations, why does he employ this host of infidels ?”

The thought was chilling to her, till, turning her head, she saw the object of her wish, as their companions at least ; a troop of warriors, armed *cap-à-piè*, like crusade soldiers ; and from amidst them, the proud charger was brought rearing, and bounding from the earth, that her father was to mount. But first, at a signal, the white elephant came forward, and crouched down on his knees ; and to the side of this magnificent creature, Eustace led his daughter.

“Berenice,” said he, “you will not fear to be carried by this noble animal ?”

“Berenice fears nothing on this earth, but being divided from her father !” was her answer.

“Cozen an angel from his orb !—and that voice, and look, will do it,” thought he ; “but it lies not in earth, or heaven, to cozen the ambition of man, from its object !”

He placed her within the golden-tissued canopy, or

rather tent, which this regal creature bore;—and all around, under its splendid draperies, testified the same royal hand in the dispensation of its furniture. It seemed a palace chamber in miniature:—and Rhodie held her attendance within its ample circle, but divided from her lady's pavilion by the intervention of a thicker curtain. In placing his daughter, Eustace told her, that the chief of the ladies she had seen, now hers, would occupy the elephants on each side of hers, in waiting of her commands; while the others, of subordinate service, were close in attendance, on their respective camels. The Emir would head his charge, on his own elephant, in the van. Berenice's train would occupy the centre.—“And for myself,” added he, “yonder is my brave Bucephalus. It will bear me gallantly, thy guard across those burning sands, where the wild tribes as often track the way as the kindly Bedouin. But were they in armies, you are secure with such a host as this. Therefore rest happy, my own Berenice!” and his lips, her father's lips, touched her hand;—“for yon new-orbed moon will hardly have shaped herself into the ensign of the east, before you see the Euphrates;—thine own Euphrates!—the herald of him, whose name and arms await thee there; to hail and bless, both child and parent!”

Berenice then answered his radiant smile, with one as bright, though it was full of maiden meekness; for her dream had brooded on her memory, and seemed, by even its betrothment, to sanctify the espousals to which he was conducting her. Her lips then bent to her father's hand, and he left her.

The elephant rose, still as a steam from the earth; and ere she knew he had stirred, she saw herself above the whole travelling train; for he was of the royal elephants, the highest in the stud. The trumpets blew, and the array moved on. Berenice knew she moved; but so gentle was the motion, that sailing over the bosom of those sands, when spread with smooth waters, could not have been more imperceptible to her senses. She looked up to the yet orbiting planet; for there were curtained openings in her pavilion, to command the views she pleased;—she looked around, from side to side of the apparently interminable plain.

The travelling train, though released from the trammel of a regular line, stretched far to the right and to the left. Her father's troop, alone, held in compact body; while the

crescent horsemen, were scattered extensively about in groupes of different numbers, seemingly on the look-out against any hostile object. Yet, widely spread as was all this scene, it appeared a speck on that vast trackless waste; a waste, without tree, or shrub, or blade of grass; or moving creature, save themselves.—All was silent—like the world, ere it was bidden to teem with life; all lay under the deep concave of the firmament, where the moon, and the stars, and all the host of them, shining in brightness, were indeed singing, in their harmonious movements, their Creator's praise; such anthems of the skies, when "the evening and the morning" were the beginning of days!

"Wherever I go then," cried Berenice, "thou, my God, art yet with me! for thou claspest in the world with thy hand!—and, where that is, there is shelter; there is the protection of a parent!"

The desert was not then alone in her thoughts; but the world beyond that desert; full of newness of life to her, full of duties, she trembled to contemplate!

\* \* \* \* \*

"Back to the world, and bravely dare,  
Of grief or wrong thy destined share;  
Resume life's load:  
Mourn not, but cheer thy kindred dust;  
And for thy final blessing, trust  
Safely thy God!"

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[A large gap was here in the original MS. ; but the sense of the passages lost, may easily be imagined by the reader, from the context of what remains.]

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Rhodie wept day and night, and smote her breast, and told her beads, and wept again. The poor Bedouin women in vain tried to comfort her.

"No!" cried she; "he has gone down into the depth in his sins; and there is no consolation for the mourner of the wicked!"

Berenice listened to her despair, with a yearning pity that rent yet more her own bleeding heart; for she could not say, "He might repent, and be saved, even in the expiring moment!"

There was no such conscious moment, to him, nor to any who perished with him. The blast had passed over all, in their sleep, and they were no more. Yet Berenice did not relinquish her attempt at soothing these agonies of the soul, in her faithful servant; though, alas! too truly responded by her own; and again and again she drew the camel she rode, closer to the animal which carried Rhodie, repeating to her, the only consolations of her own heart.

"Think," cried she, "on the mercy granted us! that we are spared from the death, to pray, with faith unceasingly, for the souls of the unannealed! not the lost!—for who shall dare pronounce, that any being created in the image of Him, before whom it now lies prostrate, is lost for ever?"

Rhodie wept yet more bitterly. "I cannot pray; my soul is seared like his. Oh, that night, that fatal night! when the mocking of the river, rose upon the desert, and deceived us all; when the feast of the *false one*, was given to us; and the *Emir* drew the curse of heaven upon us, by proclaiming that my Christian lady, would cross that river to be the Caliph's spouse! Then it was, I too, tasted the abomination of the just, and forgot Him, whose face I dare never seek again!—then it was, Orodes drank wine with my lord's warriors; then it was he sought, and found me in my tent, where weariness in revelry had bound me fast in sleep. He roused, and boasted of his sins to me; that he had abjured his holy faith; that he had sold himself to the great Caliph, for a golden chain, and a *harem* fairer than I; and then he uttered blasphemies, I dare not tell of—but they showed me my own vileness, in having tasted from the same cup! a drunkenness unto death! He fell before me, cursing in his sleep:—Oh! in that very moment, the tent around me felt like the mouth of hell—and I fled to yours. It was the wing of the destroying angel! and it came, and found him in that sleep—and so he died!—speak, gracious lady, to those stones, to live—and then I may believe Orodes pardoned!"

The ruffian Courd had indeed so perished. But that messenger of death, the dire samiel of the desert, had not come to blast the criminal alone; all were lost, of the whole travelling host, excepting its scanty remnant of three: and one of them, was a transgressor; even more guilty, than the wretched, ignorant, apostate, who had been swallowed by the grave!

Her father ! O ! what a thought, for a daughter, who had set her soul upon him, as the great, and good, and injured ; for whose just fame and rights, she would have sacrificed, dearer than her life, herself, to another home than his ! But when the tale was told, that horrible night ! He, yet professing Christianity ; he, yet wearing its cross upon his breast ; was leading a train of trusty followers, born in Christian lands, to league with infidels ; to draw their swords, against their brother's breast ! He was leading his daughter, the offspring of his blood ; she who had been baptized by the tears of a Christian mother, to be the partner of an infidel's bed ; to be the mother of a race, swearing eternal hatred to the Christian name ! And, by such sale, he was to purchase the crown of Jerusalem ; to be anointed there by Moslem hands !

Berenice withered to the heart, whenever these recollections came over her ; and blest the insensibility, which, seizing her the moment of their frightful exposition to her ear, had shut every sense that direful night, indeed of sin and judgment ! And when she waked ; how was it. Not where the tending hands of new sworn, busy slaves, had laid their future empress ; not in the abhorred pavilion, of the dark undoer of her father's fame, and soul ; but on the barren waste ! drenched with the contents of the bath, which had been prepared from a near well for her morning refreshment ; and which the hurl of the sudden samiel, had precipitated with the falling tent. The silken curtain of that tent, lay heavy over her, when Rhodie, then by her side, attempted to raise her head from the fearful trance, which seemed to have held them both,—and feeling about with her hand, gaspingly exclaimed ! “ Where am I ? ” Berenice's voice faintly responded Rhodie's name ; and, trying to rise also, found herself borne down again by the folds of the yet wet curtain ; which had, in fact, been their preservation from the samiel's destructive breath.

A word of horror from Rhodie, then told her what must have happened. And while the awe-struck Courd, who had once experienced the same, was speaking in a tone as if she feared to rouse the just slumbered demon of the waste ; while all around, save that one feeble, trembling whisper, lay in the soundless stillness of a dead repose, as if they two, of all the living beings who had been moving there only a few hours before, were alone existing ; Bere-

nice thought only of her father, her guilty, yet beloved father! and could herself, or cries, have broke that tent, in search of him, she would have done it. But her struggle was in vain; faint, and in despair, she fell back upon the earth. And, that was the moment, in which Heaven shed its unwearied mercy on her!

The dreadful muteness of the air was shaken, by the appalling cry of one voice—"Does any live around me?" A fearful pause succeeded, and no reply was made from other voice, than their feeble attempts, which, from distance could not be heard by him who spoke. But again that cry sounded louder and nearer; and Berenice distinguished that it was her father's; now calling frantically for his daughter, amidst the heaps of moveless, blackening dead. Desperate, it seemed to recede, or to advance, as he fled from place to place, wherever the sands were tracked by the prostrate tents, or marked by the drifted mound. Again and again the failing cries of Rhodie and Berenice, essayed to answer his incessant calls; but still the weight and thickness of their covering, seem to quench all sound. At last he rushed towards the spot—a gleam of the lurid sky, striking on the golden pinnacle of the royal tent, he discovered where it lay.

"Berenice! my daughter!" again rung from his agonized lips, and with all the despair in his soul; for he felt, if no voice answered him here, he was indeed alone!

But that voice did speak; did cry, towards him; and the fainting, eager hands struck against the mass of silk, beneath which she and Rhodie lay. A father's arm, soon rent a passage for her; and Berenice was clasped within them. Rhodie stood up, and looked anxiously around. She uttered not a word; nor did Eustace say aught, but held his daughter to his heart, and bent his face on hers. She, dumb with terrific awe, breathed to God alone her gratitude, upon that breast His mercy had yet preserved. But suddenly, the bursting shrieks of Rhodie broke the dismal silence; and the sounds were fearful; loud and shrill, as if the air were void, and the cry would unimpeded reach to the dome of heaven. "Orodes! Where is Orodes?"

"He sleeps, with the rest, Rhodie!"

Berenice gasped, and shuddered, in horror at the words, which implied that all were lost. He felt the cold chill of

her frame, shoot into his veins. "Berenice!" cried he: "Look up, my child; and let your father see, that in this hour, like the judgment-day, you can look upon him, and not upbraid him? You can see him stricken, and not join the fiends in torturing, what they have ruined!"

Berenice's soul trembled, at this adjuration. She felt the parent's throbbing heart against hers; but the desperation of his soul, was still too manifest in the impious reference at the end; and in which the sternness of command; again mingled with the wringing tenderness of the father. But she obeyed, and turned her eyes upon him.

"My father!" cried she, "you know, that only Heaven's law, is dearer to me than your will! And, oh, what have fiends to do with you and me? Have not angels saved us?"

He did not answer this, but held her firmly to his bosom a few moments, without speaking again; his face was hidden on her shoulder. Rhodie, meanwhile, was seated, weeping on the ground. Her sobs aroused him. He started from his position. "We must not stay, and perish here!" cried he. "Berenice, if you have courage, now summon it; whether it come from your sense of Heaven's protection, or your natural strength of mind, brace yourself to meet a sight that may appal all of woman within you. But you must look on it, to have any chance of leaving it. Some horse or camel, may be left alive, to bear you hence!"

Berenice did brace herself. She raised her head; and looked before, around her. The sky was brazen red in front; and there the samiel's horrid blast was wandering westward; above, behind, was lurid gray; the ashy shroud whence death had sped his shafts.—The plain lay vast, and without one obstructing object:—Where, then, were the mighty host, the splendid encampment she had seen pitched the evening before? Where the crowds of reposing animals? the gallant train of warriors, sporting with the gird, or the spear? Where, the Emir? whose delegated voice, had proclaimed her doom to the whole camp! Where, the young female slaves from so many countries, whose beautiful faces her swooning eyes had faintly discerned, sitting about her in that very tent, hardly a few hours ago!—She did not ask of these, by words: but the slowly moving eye, passing in horrid observation over the scathed level of the desert, where the new raised sand heaps, with the fallen tent, silent, and dark, lay in motionless disorder; that look



put the question, and that look answered it. She turned from the dreadful dreary spectacle; and her eye met her father's, who stood watching her countenance.

"Yes!" cried he; "that dust covers them all!" "May God defend us!" broke from her parched lip, as her head sunk upon her bosom.

"It is terrible," cried he; "but we must breast it. We must exert ourselves; for a few minutes' longer delay may level us with the rest?" He then asked, whether she had courage to assist him in seeking among the heaps, for any living animal, to aid their flight from the dismal scene. Rhodie sat in wailing despair, hearkening neither to persuasion nor command.

Berenice called inwardly on the power which alone could strengthen her to such a task, and obeyed her father; but the ghastly sights she saw, no after-time could ever erase from her memory. No creature with a spark of life remained: and both father and daughter were returning to the spot whence they set out, in that mute conviction of their death being near at hand, which gave to each too true a picture of what was passing in the other's breast, when, just as they reached the almost inanimate Rhodie, Eustace uttered a shout of joyful surprise. He discerned a band of Bedouing Arabs on the verge of the horizon, approaching from the north.

"We must meet them," cried he, "for the tail of the blast is yet to come; and they will not venture into its sweep.—Rhodie, rise and walk—I will carry my daughter, she has already done enough."

"I will rise no more from this spot," answered the poor mourner, "till the resurrection-day, and then Orodes will know who loved him!"

"Woman!" answered the prince, "he deserved not your love."

"And for that, the greater is my grief," replied she; "leave me to the death I deserved to share with him, and when we meet again, even in the pit of horror, he will know and love me then!"

"Nay, Rhodie," cried Berenice, throwing her arms about her neck, "you love me! for my sake live; and be my friend, rather than my servant, through my life!"

The Courd rose, but with a shrieking farewell to him she left behind, that seemed to cleave the earth on which he

lay ; and drawing her chadre close around her, prepared to follow. Eustace took his now heavily fatigued daughter up in his arms, the languor of the air weighing, overwhelmingly, on all the springs of life ; but her slight form was as a mere feather, when borne by the powerful nerve in his veins. Swift were his steps over the desert, and Rhodie pursued mechanically ; hence it was not long ere they got beyond the dreaded skirts of the samiel, and reached the journeying family ; for it was no more than a single family, who were then returning to their own settlement near the Euphrates, from a marriage feast with another tribe.

Eustace had only to ask their hospitable help, to obtain it ; and a camel was awarded to Berenice, who sat on it as in a chair, among the baled goods the animal carried. A share of one, was provided for Rhodie, along with the Arab's wife ; his daughter rode on a chamor, and the men performed their journey on foot. Their male guest was therefore obliged to do the same ; a hardship to him who had been unaccustomed to any other mode of travel than the back of a well-managed horse, perhaps a greater trial to the resolution of a knight of chivalry, than the brunt of a hundred battles ; but the soul of Eustace de Bouillon trampled on all difficulties ; however, he told the old Arab, that if either of his sons had enterprise to stand the hazard of the unspent samiel, and go back for half an hour to the spot he had just left, the bold adventurer might gather wealth enough from under the shrivelled tents there, to enrich his whole tribe. The patriarch thanked him, but said his tribe did not know the use of riches, therefore it would be folly to seek for what they did not need, so the wisest thing would be to speed on !

Thus, then, did this little knot of human beings, proceed eastward over the trackless wilderness, where not a blade of grass was visible, nor even the wing of a bird winnowed the air.—Yet the Arabs were content and merry, singing songs, or relating tales, to ears indeed that would not hear them. Rhodie remained in the wrapped despondency of sorrow and remorse ; Berenice, full of a profound sadness. Her father generally walked onward alone, a few hundred yards before the travelling group ; the other men never left the sides of the women's beasts. Eustace, sometimes, but rarely discoursed with them ; but he often drew near his daughter, and conversed with her cheerfully.—He did not

refer any more to the Caliph ; and as this recurred day after day she began to hope that the awful catastrophe they had just escaped, might have been a sufficient warning to him, that what he had meditated, was too impious a deed for him to dare bringing to further fulfilment.

But it was not so. When the Arabs reached a certain point in the desert, Eustace induced one of the young men to go forward in that direction to Bagdat, and there deliver a letter from him to *The Father of the Faithful*. This letter was no other than the Caliph's own epistle to him, which he sent, to identify the truth of the messenger ; and on it he wrote with his pencil, what had befallen the Emir and the cavalcade ; whither the little caravan of the Bedouins were taking him and his daughter ; and that thither his sublime majesty must send another guard of honour to receive them. But of this act, Berenice continued ignorant ; hence the new-born hope within her, began gradually to renovate her strength, and sooth her spirit.

The second day after the young Arab had been despatched, and while they were travelling due south, Berenice heard a cry of joy from the women—"The Phrat! the Phrat!" But she did not now turn her animated eye to gaze on that river, really flowing a line of light along the horizon, whose *mirage*, or rather looming there, a few days before, had deceived both her father and the Emir. Both had pointed it out to her, as the noble Euphrates she so long wished to behold ; and then the Emir quitted her presence, to perform his allotted share in the tragedy of her fate ! She, meanwhile, had stood contemplating it with all the delight of her enthusiastic feelings ; and that moment her father had seized to repeat to her again—"That it was her own Euphrates, she looked upon ! That the Caliph of Bagdat, the mighty Emperor of all the East, stood on its further bank, to hail her as his chosen queen ! and, for so rich a prize, his arms were to reward her father with the thrones of Edessa and Jerusalem !"

Berenice, when she heard this, dropt in a half unconscious swoon ; and had so lain, in a profounder trance, till she woke amidst the last horrors of the samiel. How, then, could she now raise her eyes to look upon that Euphrates, and not every hideous image rise again from its flood before her !—She could not, she did not, but buried her head deep in her garments.

On, on they travelled, till another exclamation issued from the lips of all the Arabs—“There is the *Birs!*—now we are near our rest!”

Eustace drew to the side of his daughter's camel. “Berenice,” said he, “why fold yourself up thus, in approaching some of the most noted objects on this side the river? Just before you now, on the edge of the desert, (for Berenice had obeyed her father's voice, in looking up,) stands *Birs-Nimrod*. It seems a speck at present, but when you come near, you will find it a pile of building, huge as some natural mountain.”

Berenice directed her eyes as she was desired: but her father perceived by her countenance that she took no interest in what she saw. He asked her whether she knew the history connected with that *Birs*, or tower, for so the word means in the Arabic? She replied in the negative.

“Well then,” continued he, “that is the veritable Tower of Babel! and all around, even the ground over which we are now passing, towards it, was once covered with the streets and courts of mighty Babylon. This is the land Shinar.”

Berenice's soul was indeed now roused to her eyes, and every thing else was forgotten, while her rivetted gaze dwelt upon it. The women resumed their talk to Rhodie about the *Birs*, and its wonders. Their tribe held its encampment something less than an hour's journey, from the walling mound round the great wreck of the tower itself. For to live any nearer to it, they said, was impossible, because of the chained demons which shrieked there day and night, and which had been known to tear piece-meal any rash creature, whether man or beast, who ventured within that bounding hillock.

Nevertheless, when the party arrived at the horde, Eustace told the patriarch, that he should make his abode in the tower, till proper means could be obtained to enable him and his family to proceed upon his journey. He silenced all the old man's remonstrances, by declaring that he had a spell, if it were necessary, to keep the fiends in subjection; and if any living thing were there to threaten harm, his javelin and his quiver of arrows would dispose of such also. Under this pledge, he was able at last to prevail on a stout-hearted young Arab and his wife to become a part of his furniture; indeed to supply the place of the two Courds, Rhodie having become perfectly useless as an at-

tendant, from the languor which had succeeded the extreme violence of her grief.

Eustace went forward to select a spot for his daughter's residence and his own. And he chose it in a deep cave-like hollow, in the side of a pretty wide ravine, which appeared to have been cleft in the overthrow of the higher terraces of the mount or tower. For what remained, was of a vast pyramidal form, raised by stupendous terraces, one over the other, (each formerly appropriated as treasure-houses, and dwellings for the priests,) and all erected of huge bricks from the very foundation. The cavern he had chosen, seemed part of an ancient passage, being lined with a facing of bricks of the finest fabric, and looking as fresh from the crust of time as if only the other day had put them there. It lay about half way up the mount. The then existing summit of the pile, rising many stages above the line of the cavern, appeared one shattered pile of ruins, standing like the rough cliff of a crest of rocks that had been struck with lightning, and shining in blackened brightness in the sun, from the vast masses of vitrified matter which had fallen from its yet higher stories; the whole of which had been cast headlong, and lay another vast mountain heap, a short distance forward, within the great compass of what had once been that enormous temple's court.

Berenice attentively listened to all this, as described by her father, (who now sought every means to draw her from the gloom that darkened her once so radiant beauty,) and, with some of her wonted elasticity of step, she mounted the little chamor that was to convey her to the foot of that stupendous structure, the monument of ages! to bear her within the yet existing remains of the city, built by the great-grandson of the second father of mankind; the city, which the prophet Daniel had rendered holy by his presence; the city, whence the good Cyrus had restored the poor, repentant Israelites from their captivity, back to their own land! Her father rode on, and she followed him; but how solemnly appalling was the entire desolation of the immense plain it must once have occupied! Long tracks of marsh, and pools of stagnant waters, lay amidst rank and fetid weeds; and mounds on mounds of different heights, and in different directions, stood on the dark and saline earth, the graves of streets and temples, prisons and palaces, all buried, equally undistinguishable to the lonely travellers, who now

ventured to explore their long-forgotten solitudes. That tower alone remained in any form of what it was, on which the bolt of justice had been hurled thousands of years ago! and still it stood eminent, though rent and shattered—wearing the brand on its brow, a beacon to the world, of Heaven's wrath against lawless ambition, apostacy, and rebellion!

“Ah!” cried Berenice to herself, “my father would never bring me to a spot like this, to again tempt the Almighty vengeance on himself!” and her heart glowed with comfort, in the conclusion she could not but draw; he had evidently brought her a round, that she might traverse more of this striking scene; and could he mean to dare the hand whose visible judgment lay every moment at their feet?—Impossible!—He appeared as bound in meditation as herself: and there was a dead stillness every where, as they moved along, excepting when their beasts carried them too near the pools; and then the water-snakes, more surprised than alarmed at a disturbance they had never known before, thrust forth their shining heads, and hissed at them as they passed.

When close to the embankment of the *Birs* itself, it did indeed appear a mountain; a lone, silent, awfully stupendous wreck of former grandeur; a grandeur which, like the Ark, rested on the confines of the post-deluvian world! standing now alone in that desert, interminable even to the horizon, and proclaiming, by a sign more eloquent than words, “Here stood Babylon!—But Babylon lies! fallen from her height; swept from the map of nations!—But here yet am I, the memorial of her greatness, and of her degradation!”

The tower had been surrounded by a quadrangular wall, since mouldered into an apparently merely earthen rampart; and within this, through one of its four spaces of entrance, Eustace led the chamor of his daughter. He told her she must ascend the mount on foot; for so she could not help calling the immense mass before her. With readiness she obeyed, and without a touch of weariness; for the activity of the solemnly admiring spirit, was then in every nerve. But he would not allow her to tax her strength too far, by going beyond the point of their future *menzil*; and, when entered, she welcomed her hard couch, and her rude fare, in the caverned lodging he had prepared for her, with

a kiss of thanks upon his hand ; thanks too, which she did not yet venture to utter ; those of her belief, that she was still to remain with him, his unspotted daughter.

And Berenice's days of pensive peacefulness seemed to grow upon her, gradually making her feel the little familiar cave in which she shut herself from the scorching heat of the sun, a kind of home ; and then her beauteous nights of an almost divine meditation, when she walked out on the broad levels, or ascended the higher regions of the mount, and contemplated the stars ;—the very stars which had shone on the Chaldean shepherds ! the very stars which had shone on the proud eyes of Nimrod, when he commanded the erection of that building to the skies ! the very stars which had lit the son of Cambyses, the great captain of the Lord, when he trampled under foot the idol of the temple, on whose mouldering remains she then stood !—Or at other times, when the wind was up, and the doleful cries of the jackals and panthers, and other animals of the waste, were brought to her ear by the blast from the plain beneath ; where the wild creatures, prowling about for prey among the tenantless and riven mounds, where human foot now never passed, bayed the moon fiercely in their hunger—or, desperate, tore each other with horrid howlings, while feeding on their mangled kind ;—these were points in the awful scene around her which, while they impressed her more fully of the sure Word of Prophecy, yet she shrank shuddering from ; while the others, more delightedly ever opened her heart to the devout and heaven-raised thoughts, inspired by the sublimer hours of her midnight contemplations ; all then was sabbath within her.

But the hour drew near, when the whole happy fabric would again be dissolved. She was seated in her cavern, and conversing with her former ingenuous confidence with her father, over their simple desert repast of lentils and milk, when the young Arab hurried in with information, that a vast host was approaching the *Birs* from the river ! His wife followed him almost immediately, saying, the band were coming on in full charge, and with banners flying from amidst their clouds of dust.

“ Do you see aught on their banners ? ” inquired Eustace, who had started on his feet at the first news. “ I could only see them glittering in the sun,” replied the woman. “ It

is well!" returned the prince; and told them both to ascend the *Birs*, and watch further.

When they had withdrawn,—“Now, Berenice,” resumed he, “as you answer to the demand I shall now make, you bring the blessing or the curse of your father upon your head! Know, then, that the host which these people have announced, comes from the Caliph of Bagdat. It is not improbable that himself may be with it. If so, are you prepared to receive that truly magnanimous prince, as becomes his betrothed bride? for betrothed you are; the bracelet I clasped on your arm sealed you his!”

Berenice, pale, and almost stiffened to a statue, sunk prostrate at his feet; holding up her hands imploringly, but her ashy lips could not move.

“Beware,” cried he, “of uttering one word to say me nay! for in that instant, my malediction shall fall upon you; a malediction to sever us for ever,—in this world and the next! for, in the moment I have pronounced it, this ready poniard shall preserve my honour to the Caliph! And you, betrayer of your father, will be left to the just doom of a parricide! Speak!—But let it be yea?”

Berenice closed her eyes from the insufferable horror of his countenance. He stood over her, indeed, like the fell adversary of mankind, full of fury, and conscious impotence to compel his will; and yet he was her father, denouncing the sin of his own death, and lasting perdition on her head, if she did not comply with his demand! But to see him die so, by his own hand, cursing her; was more than her filial heart could stand, and with a terrific shriek, she exclaimed—

“Do with me what you please!”

Her father raised her from the ground, and kissed her lips, but they were cold and shuddering. Yet, he had gained his point, and he was triumphant. He laid her icy chilled frame down upon the mattress, in the corner of her cave; and sending in Rhodie to her assistance, whose little chamber was in a similar excavation, himself hastily clambered the mount to its summit, to take cognizance with his own eyes of the approaching array. But when up there, and he looked down, it bore an aspect so different from what he anticipated, and almost all of it having arrived within shadow of the *Birs* itself, that his own senses seemed taken with a sort of dizzy apprehension he could not com-



prehend. He therefore hurried from that pinnacled scalp of the ruins, to examine the appearance a little nearer.

In doing this, he rushed, unmarking, into one of the shunned ravines of the building, which, by its smell, had hitherto given him warning to avoid it; and from similar intimation alone, both himself and the members of his family, had hitherto protected themselves from any chance of meeting the wild animals that made their dens there.

But now, the prince, heedless of his steps in pursuit of what he considered the crowning pillar of his life, darted along the bone-strewn causeway. He had scarcely advanced half-way towards the opening that looked towards the Euphrates, before he felt himself hurled upon the jagged brickwork of the path, and with a force he knew no human person possessed; but the same moment dreadfully explained it. A young lioness, suckling her cubs, hearing man's steps passing the mouth of the fissure that contained her den, had burst upon him, and her paw was now upon his breast. But instantly she sprung up again,—a javelin had been levelled at her haunch, and struck it, and she turned with blazing eye balls on him who had launched it; but when in the very act of pouncing on the then unweaponed chief who had wounded her, a wild yet feeble roaring was heard from the adjacent fissure, and thither instantly rushed the lioness.

“Yonder is her den,” observed two soldiers, just come up behind the man who had struck the javelin, “shall we follow and despatch her?”

“No,” cried Eustace, covering the rent in his bleeding breast with the folds of his mantle, “let her live! she has slain me in defence of her offspring, on the spot where I came to sacrifice my own!”

But the men not regarding this injunction, so like that of wandering intellect in the dying person, over whom their leader was then leaning, were turning with their pointed spears into the fissure, when Eustace, by a violent effort, raising himself on his arm, called to them—“Stop, and obey the last command of Eustace de Bouillon!”

They did. For who among the crusade ranks knew not that name! In wondering reverence of the great renown, they then saw bleeding there, they lowered their arms before his glazing eyes. And their leader, (who had seen the plunge of the lioness even in the moment of his entering the ravine on the opposite quarter, and by the immediate

impulse of humanity, had lanced his weapon at her,) he bent over the fallen man, with something more than respect and pity;—he bowed himself there, in speechless amazement, over Eustace de Bouillon, the fallen indeed!

For now he must read in him, the renegade Christian chief, whose messenger he had accidentally encountered in the Arab's way to Bagdat; and discovering he was carrying some embassy to the Caliph, he took it from him; and finding, not merely the Caliph's pledge to put the person to whom he wrote in possession of the Holy Land, but also that person's reply written on it, the reader stood astounded with horror at a compact of such dire sacrilege between this nameless traitor, who dared to avow himself a crusade chief, and yet the enemy of them all. But the words in the letter, which had moved its gallant interceptor to present himself before the halting-place of so vile a shame to knighthood, whoever he might be, were these,—“Come and take my daughter: she resists every persuasion from the dignity of the Caliph, but his presence must subdue her by his love!” Therefore, to rescue a Christian maid from such abhorred defilement, this youthful soldier of the cross, called his brave companions in arms around him, put the despatch into his own bosom, and dismissing the Arab, immediately sped forward to the *Birs-Nimrod*.

For him, then, to find this premeditated murderer of his own soul; this extinguisher of all his earthly honours, in the person of Eustace de Bouillon! a hero, whose name he had ever regarded with wonder and admiration—for youth does not easily discover blame, in the splendid reputation—was, altogether, an astonishment, that might have allowed him to hesitate in believing it, if, in bending down to examine the wound which the last exertion of Eustace had made bleed torrents, he had not seen what was likely to confirm his words. He thought he remembered the features, though now so ghastly in death, to be the same of the unknown Christian chief of the caravansary; and then he had marvelled at his royal port, and suspected his rank to be beyond his retinue.

Eustace, in one glance, recognised his deliverer to be Canute de Beaufort, the son of that Harold (happy in an honoured grave!) who had been his own compæer; and who had saved his arm from slaying Courtenay at Jerusalem, when suspecting him of traversing his wooing of Be-

renice's mother!—In the caravansary he had known him to be that Beaufort's son : but he also knew that Baldwin de Bourg had set him down next in succession after that very Courtenay, to the throne of Jerusalem ! What ! to be supplanted again and again ; at one time by a man he had held under his sword ! and, lastly, by a boy ! His pride of nature would not brook the common course of forcing restitution ; and when accident brought him thus, suddenly, under the same roof with this his young unconscious rival, he would have destroyed him that very night in the caravansary. But, oh ! short-sighted man ! the Almighty had preserved him, to save his intended murderer ; to save him to a better life than this ; to yield him " the eleventh hour " in his last day !—more to the erring, but immortal spirit, than all its years before.

" De Beaufort ! " said Eustace, " I know thee. Raise me—I have yet strength to walk, and lean on thy arm. I will guide you where my daughter is. You must go in, and tell her what has happened ; and tell her, the world, and all its vanities, are over with her father ! "

De Beaufort obeyed, as he was commanded by that voice which ever spoke as a sovereign ; but he obeyed, with the tenderness of the most heart-penetrated compassion ; for his own quickly discerning mind soon began to comprehend, without any direct explanations, the unhappy combinations, public and private, which had led to the direful result ;—which, if not stopped at this very point, might have blotted the name of De Boullion with as foul a stain, as it then stood spotless fair !

At the entrance of the cavern, Eustace seated himself on a jutment of the wall, while De Beaufort entered to execute his melancholy task. Berenice lay upon her mattress, supported by Rhodie ; and, with a shock of strange inexplicable feelings, (but only inexplicable for the moment,) he beheld again the same corpse-like phantom of beauty, which had visited his *menzil*, and sent him abroad—a fugitive from death, that memorable night of the storm over the Chical pass. He did not pause to ask himself, why a new horror had started in his mind against the Prince de Bouillon, when he saw her ;—he approached and spoke.

" Lady Berenice ! "

The stranger accents, and in such a tone of pity, made her uncloset her sealed eyes ;—eyes, that she had prayed, if

heaven willed, might never look on aught on earth again ! She gazed upon the speaker ; upon his red cross armour ; and then upon his face. She thought it was like De Beaufort's. But how could she now trust any of her thoughts ! All seemed to surround her continually with vain shadows. But she exclaimed, " How comes a Christian knight here ! Where is my father ?"—And she half arose, with a look of wild inquiry round her.

Short was De Beaufort's explanation ; but its full force could not be averted from the poor broken reed it almost crushed. Her father torn by a wild beast ! Dying even then, at the door of her cave ! But the mortal pang in her soul summoned her nerve to its task ;—she started from the ground, on which her mattress lay, rushed to the mouth of the cavern, and beheld him.

She did not faint ; nor once withdraw her eyes from the terrific spectacle he presented. It was her father—her dying father—her repentant parent !—And, all she could now hope, was to expire when he should cease to breathe. By her assistance, with De Beaufort's, he was led into the cave, and laid on his own felt, which was nearer the entrance than hers ; but his arm still clung, as if his soul were in it, to her neck, while she continued kneeling close to him.

" De Beaufort," said he, " I have not many minutes to live ; the fangs went deep enough to reach my vitals ; but when I am gone, what is to be done with this forlorn one ? There is a sanctuary on Olivet !—if you, a Christian knight, will conduct her to it ?—And betimes, dear Beaufort !—that you be not interrupted by the Caliph to whom I was base enough to pledge her. But my punishment is on me—over me !"—and he shuddered, with a rigour over him as of immediate dissolution ; his eyes fixed, and his teeth ground against each other. Oh ! what was then that countenance, which so lately had seemed that of a god ! Berenice threw herself beside him on his bed, and was sensible to nothing, but calling on the mercy of Heaven ! De Beaufort, too, spoke he knew not what ; for he hardly believed that ear heard his immediate vow, to devote himself to Berenice in all things. But Eustace did hear him, and revived : for her fate, was the agony of soul which had seized him ; not the pangs of the body's separation. He again raised his head, and turned his eyes upon the young Englishman.

" She deserves it of thee ;" cried he, " however worth-

less her father may be ;—for she saved thy life at the pass of Chical.”

He paused again, breathlessly ; and Berenice, who had risen when her father resumed his speech, listened withering with new horror, at this confession of all that fearful night had portended.

“ From whatever cause arose the menace of my life,” returned De Beaufort, “ I have never ceased to cherish her image, who warned me thence ; and Providence has been my guide to swear it to her ! I am on my return from Edessa, where we have discomfited the Caliph’s troops ; and driven him too far into the East, to leave it likely he should meet me here. But even in the moment of his flight from Bagdat, I found, and freed, the son of Courtenay of Edessa, whom all had supposed slain. And now feeling myself freed by that discovery, I am on my journey homeward, by Jerusalem ; there to resign into Baldwin’s hands, his bestowed heritage of the two sovereignties ! For,—I am young, and I have fought, and I have gathered glory, but O ! through what fields of horror !—my soul is sick of all, of every thing, but what empowers the Christian who may sheath his sword, to walk humbly with his God, and be at peace with all his kind ! If, then, to such a man, with only an earldom’s simple home in England, and a faithful heart, as dowry from a husband,—you, prince ! would bestow her to my care, twelve months, under my mother’s roof, I would try to win her love ; and, if I fail, then she shall be free to command me, to take her to any other asylum ; to any noble house in England, or back to Olivet in Palestine.”

Eustace had listened, during this, with many varied emotions ; he felt he saw the true hero before him ; the man who fought for the glory, not the prey ; for the relief of men, not a dominion over them. When he heard that the Caliph of Bagdat had already been conquered, and fled, how wide did the hand of awful retribution seem to him to stretch ! On himself it lay, sealing the fiat of an eternal banishment. Dark as he was in soul, and going downward, even with the eyes of his mental vision opened, into the interminable abyss, his spirit clung to his daughter—he took her hand within his cold grasp :—

“ Berenice ! If my eyes are to close in any peace, you will confide this hand to him on the conditions he proffers.” Almost mechanically she obeyed, and the ready hand of De

Beaufort grasped hers, till her father, gaspingly, resumed—  
“Thanks, De Beaufort; thanks, my child. I owe thee, Berenice, more than father ever can repay; for by thee, my soul has been saved from the overwhelming consciousness of blood-guiltiness, at this hour; but yet the sin of the intent is on me, and the sin of the dire intent of sacrificing thee. How shall I wash those prints of my sentence? Will this blood, from my lacerated veins, do it? No, Berenice—pray, pray for thy father, that he find not a throne in the pit of perdition when he leaves thee.”

“Oh, my father!” cried she; “the blood of him who died upon the cross, will wash you white as snow. Hating your sins, believe but in his mercy, and you are saved.” She was on her knees, when she uttered this.

“De Beaufort, you are a man and a soldier; is it so?”

“It is the fact, the divinely sanctioned fact,” returned the young earl; “and if need were, I would go to the stake to manifest my belief, that it is so; but I have with me, one in my army, who will give it more holy evidence than lies on a soldier’s lip.”

And, without waiting for reply, he instantly quitted the cave, and with the haste of a moment returned, accompanied by the venerable confessor, who had been his companion to Palestine. A word introduced him to the confidence of Eustace, and while he commenced in low accents with the dying penitent, Berenice with Rhodie and De Beaufort knelt together, though apart, and all prayed earnestly, though silently, for the departing soul.

At last Eustace called to them to draw near him.

“This man of God,” said he, “has shown me the gates of heaven, opening even for me—has shown me the mantle with which the all-sufficient Expiator, will cover my loathsomeness, and change it to his own bright purity. Come close to me, my child! and here, on my bed of death, receive the first and the last earthly blessing from thy father’s lips—yet, if I may, even in another life, I will bless thee!”

Berenice drew close to him—shall I say it, happy in her misery, for she saw his redeemed spirit before her, and in his eternal happiness her own soul rejoiced. The confessor had already touched him with the sacred unction, had given him to taste of the holy rite, which to the penitent alone, can ever be administered. Eustace opened his arms to receive his daughter. The horrid rent in his breast was

hidden from her sight, by the coils of stuff with which De Beaufort had staunched the blood. Trembling, but full of a filial love, that would have gladly never risen thence, she put herself within his arms, and there heard those precious words breathed over her, that seemed again to seal her his, his own daughter for ever. He felt the filial agony that beat in her heart against his failing pulse, and calling up the last effort of his strength, firmly added :

“ Having blessed thee, my child, I leave thee for the presence of my Redeemer—and there, my best beloved! before his footstool, thou wilt find me with thy mother—perfected in bliss, when thou art with us.” With the last half-breathed sentence, his face sunk upon her head, and his clasping arms fell from her sides.

She needed no more, to tell her the mighty spirit had fled—and herself fell back insensible upon the breast of Rhodie.

She was taken thence by De Beaufort, and carried to the foot of the mound, where his own temporary tent had been pitched. But no real recollection returned to her, while the solemn rites were performing above, which consecrated the cave of her father to be his tomb; and closed its narrow entrance with many piles of gathered bricks upon his lonely remains! De Beaufort, when he turned from the spot, exclaimed, under a shower of tears, “ So rest thee, brave De Bouillon—man cannot now be thy adversary; and thy peace is with God!”

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The English earl, on descending, was glad to seize the paroxysm of the daughter's wandered thought, to bear her from the place entirely; and, by the dexterity of his soldiers, who soon formed a canopy, large enough to contain her and Rhodie, with some willow boughs which they brought from the Euphrates (hardly more than an hour's ride from the *Birs*;) and making draperies of his scarfs, she was placed carefully within it, on the back of a trusty camel, and attended by her Courd, who now loved her, indeed, as her all on earth.

But ere the brave battalions, which were now her con-

ductors, had passed quite out of view of Babylon, Berenice raised her head from her pillow, and looking earnestly at Rhodie, who sat at her side, asked her, "whether it were true, what her own memory told her; that her father was dead, and she was now a poor, homeless, outcast orphan?"

"Not homeless, nor outcast," returned the Courd, "the preserving angel is with us. But look yonder, lady, there is the *Birs* for the last time."

"And there my father sleeps!—My father! O my father! Babylon has indeed been a land of desolation to thy child?" And she threw herself back on her pillow, in the wringing throes of an unutterable sense of wo. But starting again, to once more behold the spot where he lay, she looked, but it was gone! and then, with a cry, as if himself had vanished suddenly from her sight, she sunk down, weeping tears, which only Heaven's balm could stay.

But I need not recount the days of Berenice's fearful visitation. She passed through Jerusalem, and, leaning on the arm of De Beaufort, knelt by her mother's grave; and there both plighted their vows to each other; for she felt, that if her heart now drew to anything beneath the heavens, it was to the brave and gentle being who had saved her father! Saved him, as the minister of mercy saves the dying Christian.

Again she trod the green heights of Olivet. But the plumage of its dove was yet too ruffled in her breast, to abide the memories that pressed upon her. Yet those were there, who promised, if she would summon them, to join her in the fair land to which she was journeying. But one left the mount even then. De Beaufort had brought Alexius Poligne in his train; and he soothed, and wedded Salomé.

The travel and the voyage were performed. And it was in happy sheltered England, that Berenice began to feel the power of the balm, which her father's hallowed hour in dying breathed into her heart; also the blessing he had bestowed upon her, in giving her to the protection of De Beaufort; and, in the same day that she became his wife, before the altar of the little chapel of his lady mother in her castle at Burnham-Beeches, (where the Baroness of Hardres, and her noble lord, were also present,) she founded this chantry of ours in the gently declining valley near, for



the souls of them who perished in the desert, when those dearest to her were spared, to die a death of hope!

Rhodie became a comforted sister of the order, and under the sainted name of Magdalena, died among us only a year ago.—But shall I not speak of them who came from Olivet? Mildred was the friend, who awaited, and obeyed the call. And here Mildred has continued, till, as your reverend mother Agnes, she becomes the writer of this record.

But our lady did not desert us, after she had become a happy bride.—She came weekly to our oratory, to join her prayers with ours, for them who lay beneath the sand. And she remembered *Jerusalem* too in her orisons; and *Babylon* the great city, lying afar off in its own vast sepulchre? forgotten, now, almost by man, till the great day, when it will arise to judgment;—and to mercy, she trusts!—for she knows in whom she trusts;—who, then, can make her doubt? With such conviction, she ever leaves the altar of our priory, and with a smile of radiance over her countenance; oh! how like an angel!

But where would it end, were I to register her every deed of blessedness within this house, and without it, to all her benign spirit can influence? The gates of Ockhoults, her husband's favourite home, never open, but to greet with kindness, or to dispense beneficence.—And the names of the Lady Berenice and Earl Canute of Beaufort, are never breathed by poor or rich, without prayers from the one, and words of reverence by the other.

Such, my daughters, is your benefactress! and such having been the result of Berenice's pilgrimage, I can only add,—when my voice is hushed, teach the young and the innocent, who come from the world, to study her meek virtues, “and go and do likewise!”

















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